PRO GUIDE TO

Sewing

DIGITAL EDITION

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24 MUST-MAKE PROJECTS

+ 15 ADVANCED TECHNIQUES TO TRY

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Show off your favourite fabrics with our designer projects.

Pick up your needle!

One of the joys of sewing is its infinite variety. With all the possible combinations of fabric and trims, the only limit to what you can create is your imagination! But sometimes, you might need some expert advice to try new techniques – that's where our *Pro Guide to Sewing* comes in. We've gathered a wealth of expertise on subjects as diverse as piping, zips, interfacing and seam finishing to help you take your projects to the next level. You'll find our step-by-step guides clear and easy to follow, with illustrations to show you just what to do. And so that you can hone your new-found skills, we've selected a range of patterns from the very best books, blogs and industry insiders. Created by some of the most talented names in stitching, each beautifully designed sewing project will give you hours of crafting pleasure.

Happy sewing!

Alice

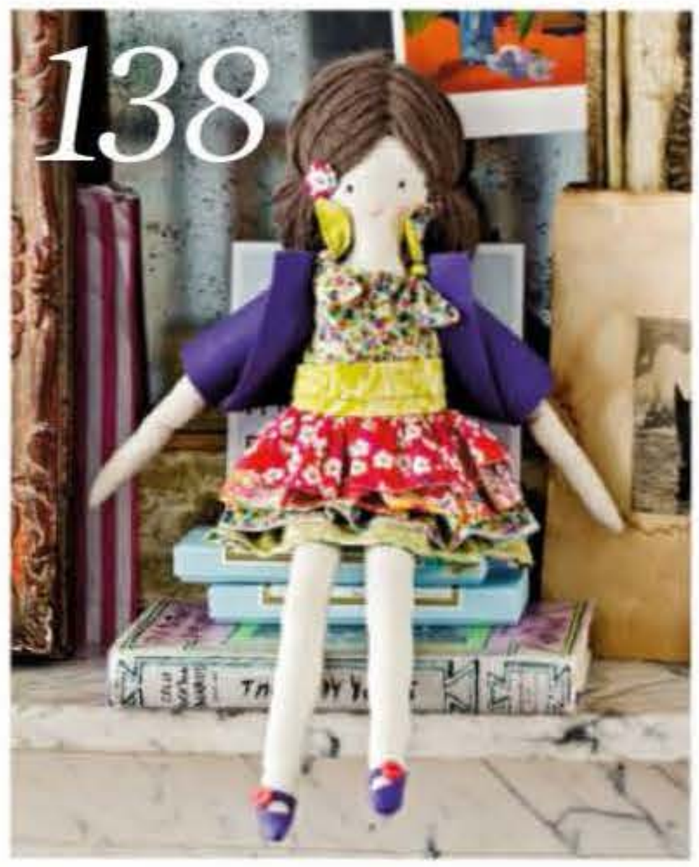
x

Alice Blackledge
Editor

Our clear step-by-step illustrations will make stitching simple.

PRO GUIDE TO Sewing

Take your sewing to the next level



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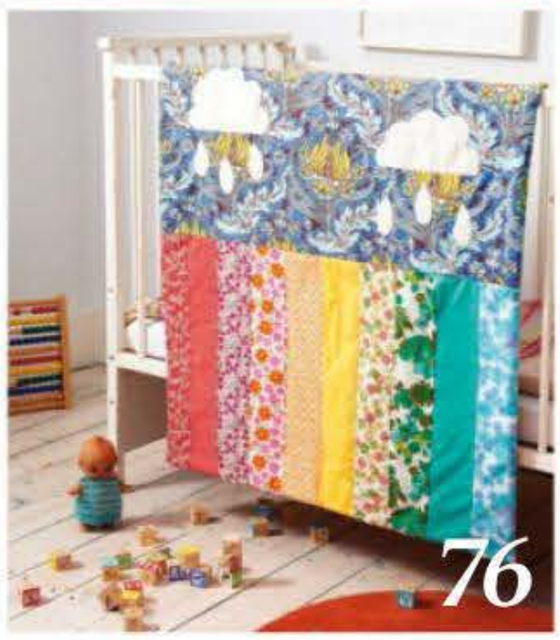

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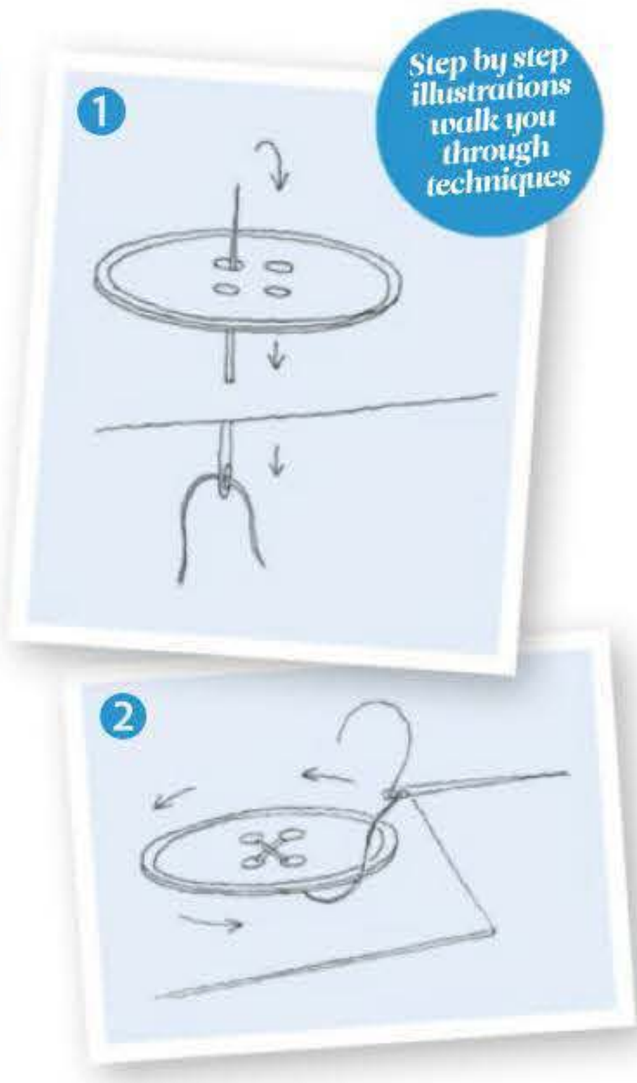


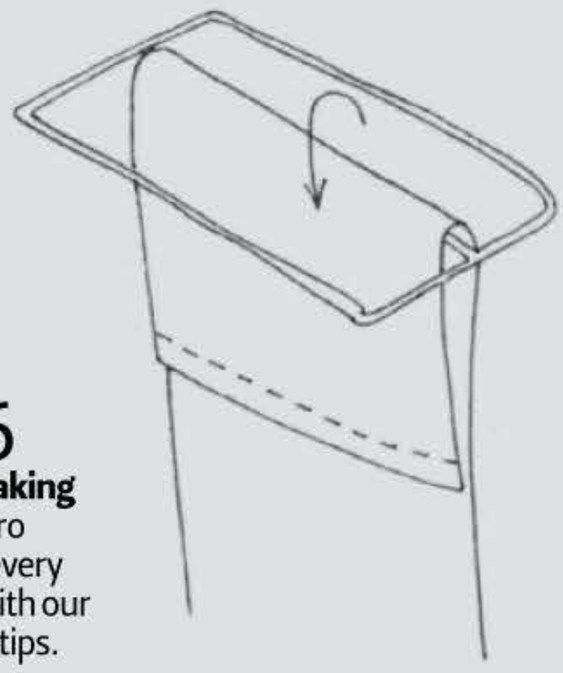
Pro Guide to Sewing

Whether you're looking for a new challenge or a chance to improve your techniques, the *Pro Guide to Sewing* has everything you need...

Even the most accomplished sewist is always looking for new projects to make and new challenges to try – well, you're in luck! The *Pro Guide to Sewing* is packed with stylish sewing patterns that are sure to keep you busy with needle and thread.

The *Pro Guide to Sewing* is split into four main sections. The Essentials section covers sewing basics such as seams, piping, buttons and more, giving professional tips to achieve a perfect finish every time. Each technique covered is accompanied by one or more projects, to help test out your new skills while creating something stylish and practical. The Hand Sewing section looks at a range of techniques, from hand appliqué to embroidery, and is perfect for those of us who like to relax on the sofa with our work. The Machine Sewing section includes bag making, quilting, machine embroidery and more, while finally our Info section contains everything you need to know, from fabric types to washing instructions, as well as a stockist listing. Again, each technique in the sewing sections is illustrated by at least one classic project to show it off.

Happy sewing!



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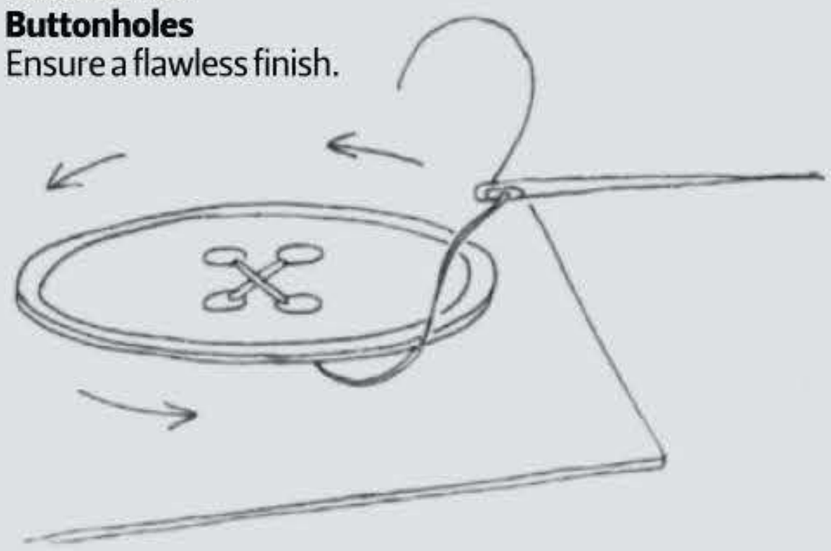

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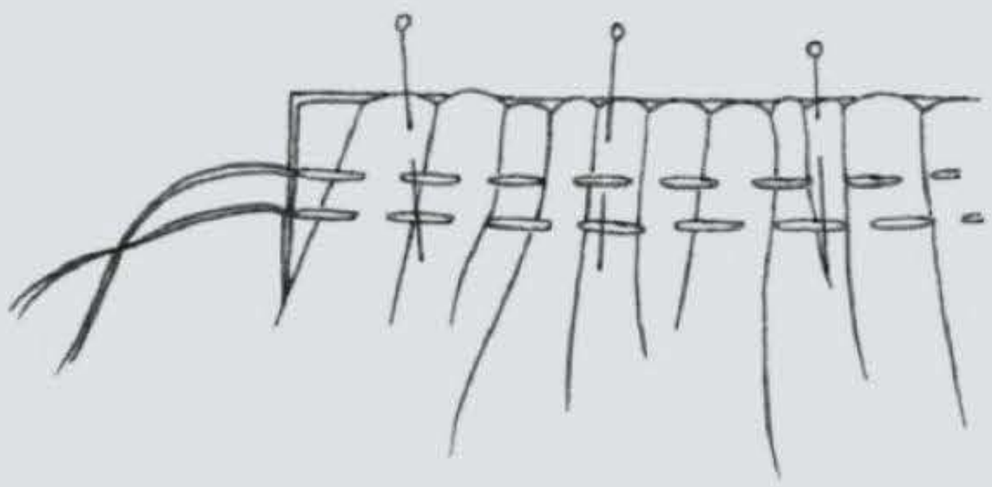

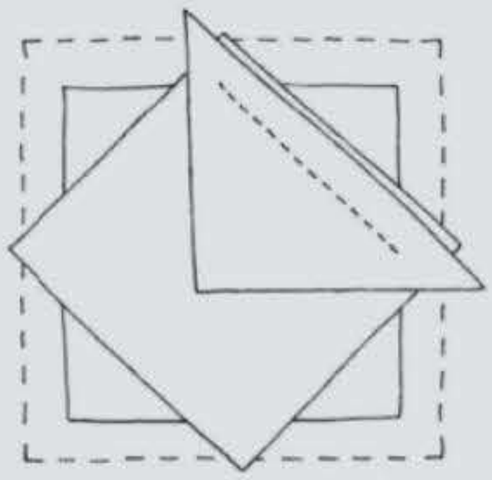

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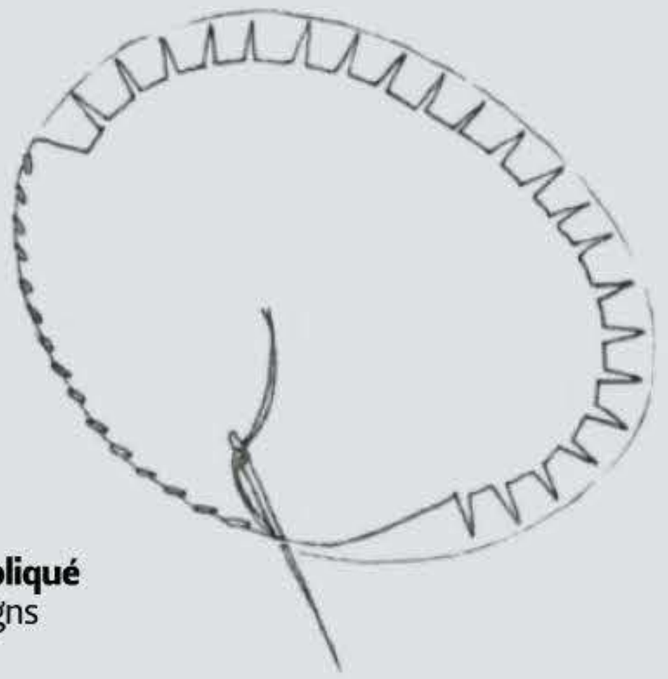

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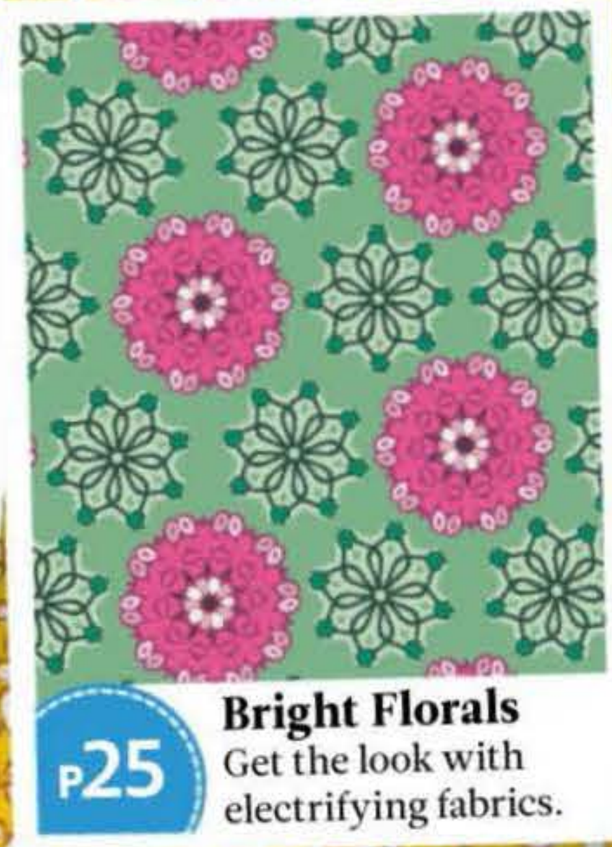

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Brighten up your bathroom!

Expert GUIDE

SEAMS

Brush up on your skills and learn a few new tricks to improve the foundations of your sewing.

SEAM ALLOWANCES

It's really important to always check the seam allowance for each project before you start. Sometimes seam allowances change within a project for different stages, so do make sure you follow this accurately.

REINFORCING SEAMS

Some seams such as bag seams can be reinforced to make them stronger. To do this, after you have worked the usual seam, work another one 3mm (⅛in) in towards the raw fabric edges from the first one.

LAYERING SEAMS

If you are stitching thick fabric together, or several fabrics, then you need to reduce the bulk of fabric in the seam allowance. This is done by trimming the raw edges of each fabric by different amounts after the seam has been stitched. Always trim the seam allowances of piping as otherwise they will be particularly bulky.

TOP STITCHING

Topstitching is worked to hold the fabric in place and it also looks decorative. It is stitched on the right side of the fabric parallel with a seam or pressed edge, usually very close to the edge. It's really important that topstitching is neat and straight as it will be clearly seen. You can use contrast coloured or thick topstitching thread to accentuate the stitching.

SEW AN INNER CURVE

1. Place right sides of fabric together.
2. Sew a seam, ensuring the sewing line follows the curve at the distance from the edge that was set as the seam allowance in the project instructions.
3. You'll need to reduce the bulk so the curve lies flat. Clip the seam as shown (**fig 1**) to reduce the amount of fabric. On extreme curves and angles you can cut small notches out of the seam allowance to reduce bulk further.
4. Turn right sides out and press.

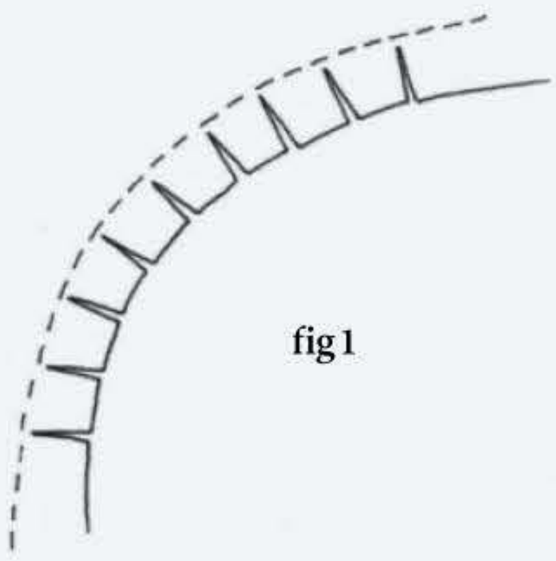


fig 1

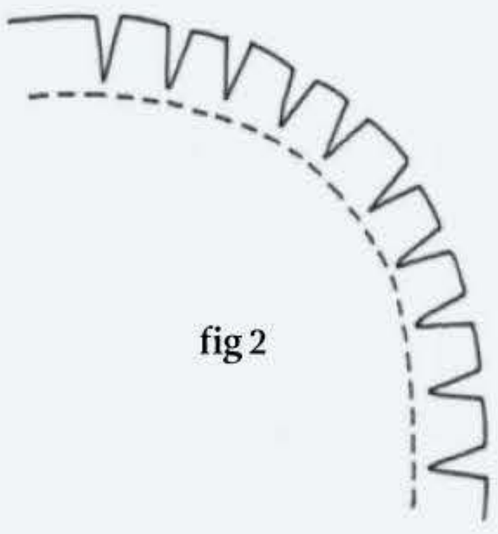


fig 2

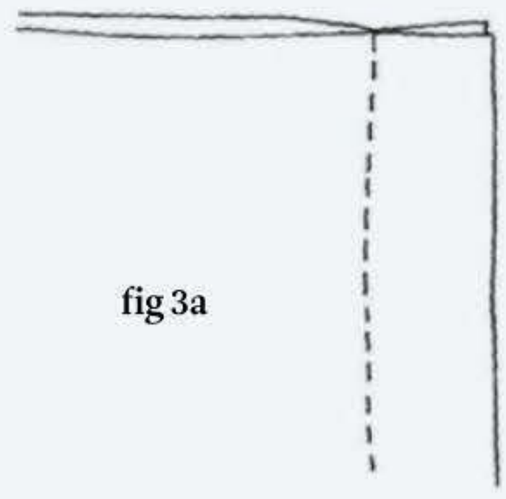


fig 3a

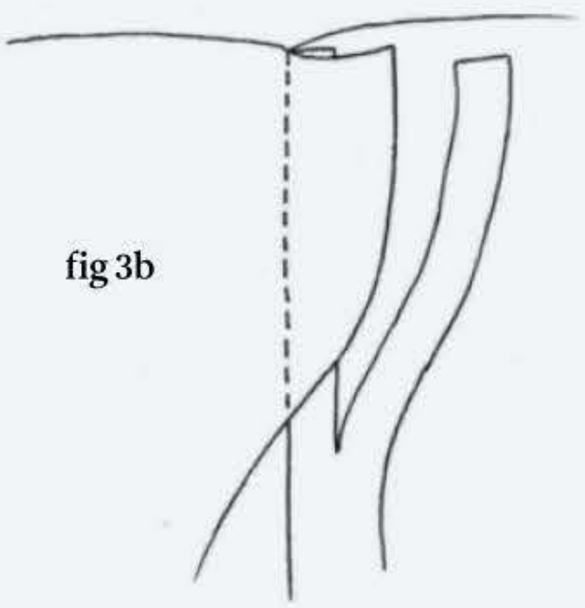


fig 3b

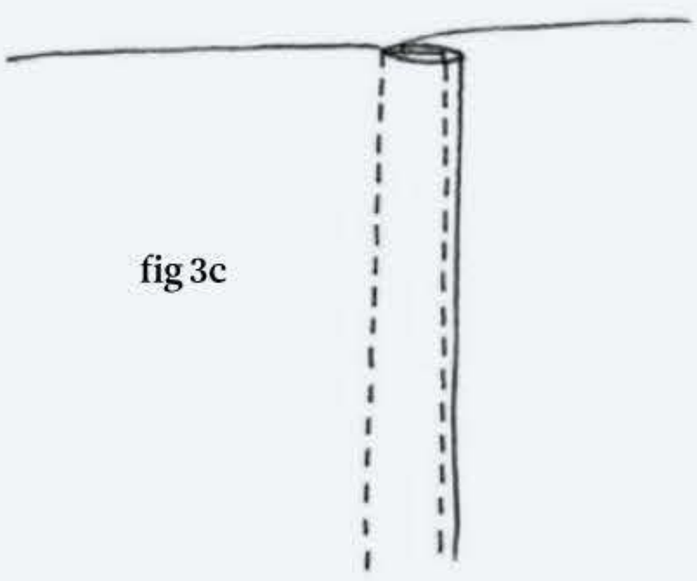


fig 3c

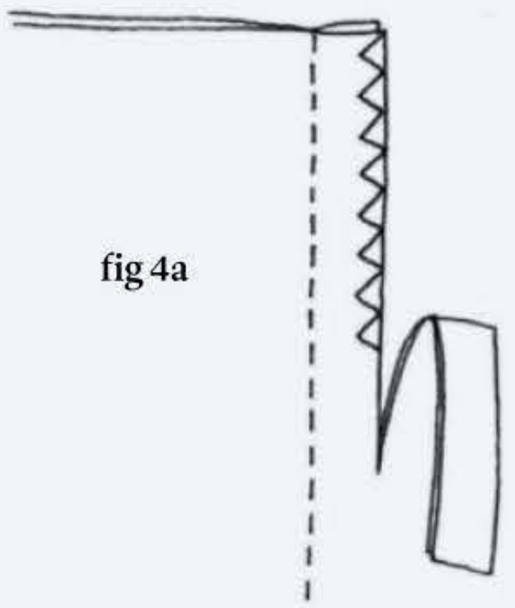


fig 4a

SEW AN OUTER CURVE

1. Place right sides of fabric together and stitch the seam.
2. Ensure the sewing line follows the curve at the distance from the edge that was set as the seam allowance in the project instructions.
3. Cut notches in the seam allowance to reduce the bulk (**fig 2**).
4. Turn right sides out and press.

OTHER SEAMS

Flat Felled Seam

The raw edges of this seam are neatly hidden within it. It is often used where both sides of the fabric will be seen, for example to make joins in a tablecloth. Use a 1.6cm (5/8in) seam allowance.

1. Place the two edges wrong sides together and match up raw edges. Stitch 1.6cm (5/8in) in from the edge (**fig 3a**).
2. Trim one seam allowance to 6mm (1/4in) (**fig 3b**).
3. Open out the fabric and press the seam so the wider seam allowance lies on top of the trimmed one. Tuck the wider seam allowance over the trimmed edge and press. Stitch close to the pressed fold to enclose the trimmed seam allowance (**fig 3c**).

Narrow seam

This seam is ideal for sheer or more delicate fabrics as it is a little neater and stands out less than a flat seam.

1. Stitch a flat seam in the usual way then trim both seam allowances to half their original width. Zig zag stitch the two raw seam allowance edges (**fig 4a**).
2. Press the edges of the seam allowance into the middle of the seam (to conceal) and press. Stitch the two folded edges together by hand (**fig 4b**).

French Seam

This is a narrow seam that looks like a flat seam on the right side but forms a ridge on the wrong side. It's perfect for fabrics that fray as all the edges are enclosed.

1. Place your fabric wrong sides together and tack along the seam line (**fig 5a**). Work your first row of stitching 6mm (1/4in) from the seam line. Remove the tacking stitches and press the seam allowances open on the right side.
2. On the right side press the seam allowances together then trim both allowances to within 3mm (1/8in) of the stitching (**fig 5b**).
3. Open out the fabric and fold it so that the right sides are together. Roll the seam so that the join is right on the edges and tack together near this edge. Press.
4. Stitch beside the row of tacking (**fig 5c**), then remove tacking stitches and press the seam towards the back of your item.

Bound Seam

A bound seam has each of the raw edges of its seam allowances enclosed in a strip of bias binding tape – this stops the fabric from fraying and strengthens the seam.

Work a flat seam in the usual way, then pin bias binding round each of the two edges of the fabric individually and stitch into place. Press the seams open.

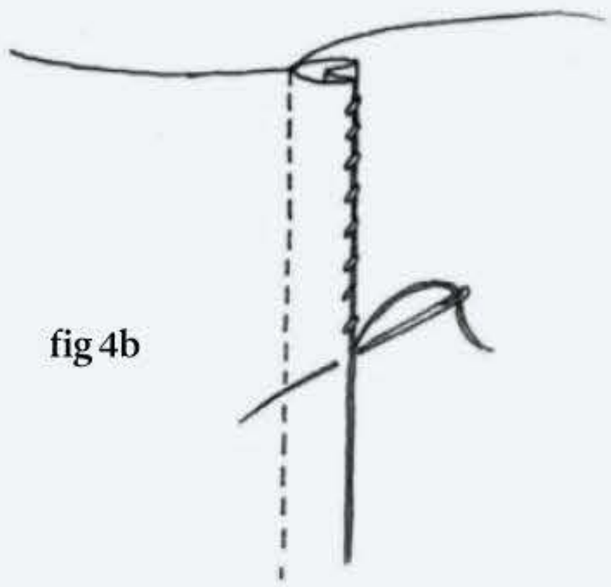


fig 4b

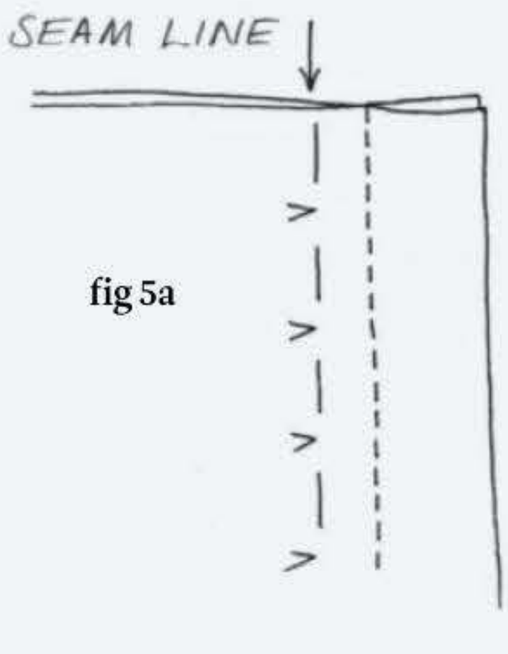


fig 5a

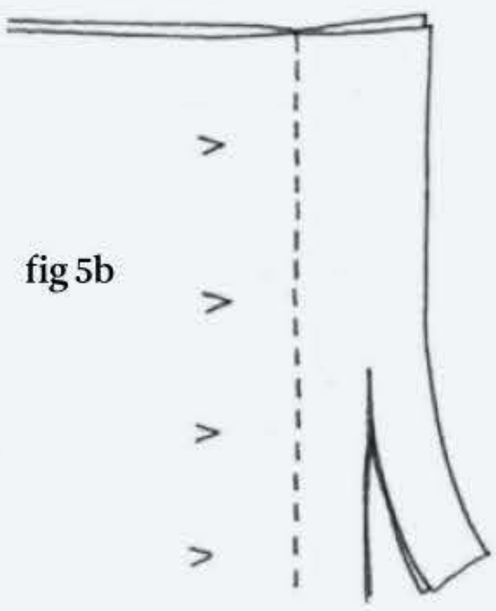


fig 5b

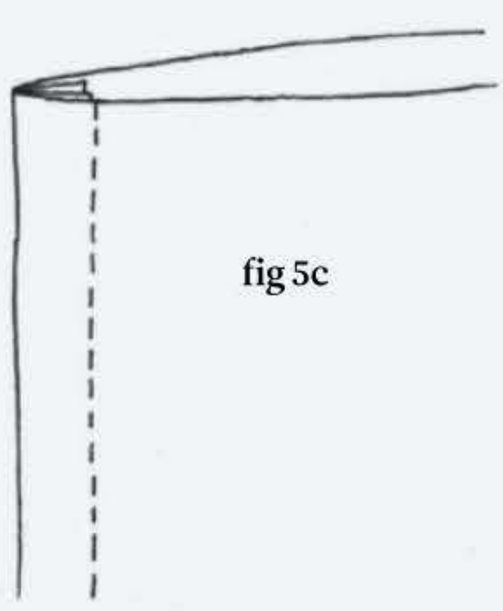


fig 5c

> A NARROW SEAM IS IDEAL FOR SHEER OR MORE DELICATE FABRICS, AS IT IS A LITTLE NEATER AND STANDS OUT LESS THAN A FLAT SEAM

Birch Tote Bag

This stylish bag is quick to make, great for showing off favourite prints and packed with pockets to hold everything you need.

YOU WILL NEED

- 1.14m (1¼yds) main fabric
- 0.9m (1yd) contrast fabric
- Two 43cm (17in) pieces piping
- 46cm (18in) iron-on interfacing

CUTTING OUT

From main fabric:

- Two 7 x 71cm (2¾ x 28in) pieces for straps (cut first)
- Two 36 x 43cm (14 x 17in) pieces for upper outer body
- Four 28 x 43cm (11 x 17in) pieces for inner pockets

From contrast fabric:

- Two 18 x 43cm (7 x 17in) pieces for lower outer body
- Two 43 x 51cm (17 x 20in) pieces for inner lining

From interfacing:
Two 2.5 x 71cm (1 x 28in) strips for straps

All seam allowances are 1.5cm (½in) unless otherwise stated.

For stockist details, see page 160

WHAT BETTER WAY to show off an amazing fabric than with a tote bag? Bright, bold prints can really shine, and this reversible pattern is sure to become a firm favourite. With a few fun features like piping and an iPad pocket, this isn't just an ordinary tote, and will give you plenty of opportunities to practise your seaming techniques.

Many parts of the tote can be customised to suit your needs. It's designed with long straps to be worn crossways, but they can be lengthened or shortened as needed. The pockets are sized to hold a tablet and phone, but again these can easily be adjusted.

INNER POCKET PIECES

1 Pin a length of piping across the long side of one pocket piece, matching up the raw edges. Baste in place.

2 Once piping is basted, lay the second pocket piece on top (right sides together with the first piece) sandwiching your piping in between (**fig 1**). Sew this in place with the row of basting stitching showing to use as a guide. You will position your new line of stitching just to the left of the basting stitches. This ensures your piping will be firmly sewn in place.

3 Once sewn, flip your pocket piece wrong sides together and press along the top seam. You should have a neat line of piping across the top and three raw edges.

4 Sew a line of stitching beneath your piping to secure your seam. There's no exact seam allowance here, just sew with your presser foot against the line of piping.

5 Repeat these steps for the second pocket assembly.

LINING PANELS

6 Start by laying one inner (contrast) piece down with right side up. Lay your assembled pocket piece on top, right side facing up, matching up your raw edges along the sides and bottom. Baste in place around all edges except the top.

7 Repeat these steps with the opposite inner panel and pocket pieces.

8 Once both your pockets are basted in place, you'll need to decide on pocket sizes. Here, we have chosen to do different sizes on each side of the pockets. For the first side, measure 28cm (11in) across the width of the pocket and mark the line with chalk (**fig 2**).

9 Next, topstitch along the chalk line from just under the piping down to the basting stitches to form the pocket. (You may want to add a second row of stitching 6mm (¼in) from the first for decoration and added durability.)

10 For the second pocket side, fold the piece in half to find the centre and mark it with a chalk line. Stitch along this line to form your second set of pockets. You can easily change these pockets sizes to suit your own needs.

BOTTOM OF BAG

11 Measure 6.5cm (2½in) from the bottom of your lining pieces and mark a horizontal line in chalk. You will stitch along this line to form the pocket bottom. Repeat with your second inner panel/pocket piece as well (**fig 3**). This eliminates the dead space that would be at the bottom of each pocket once the sides are formed. ▶

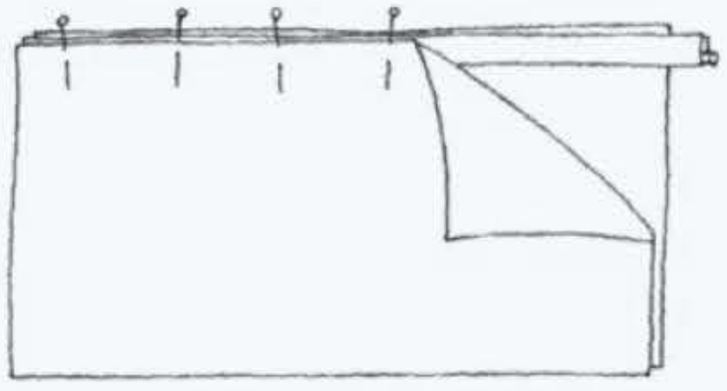
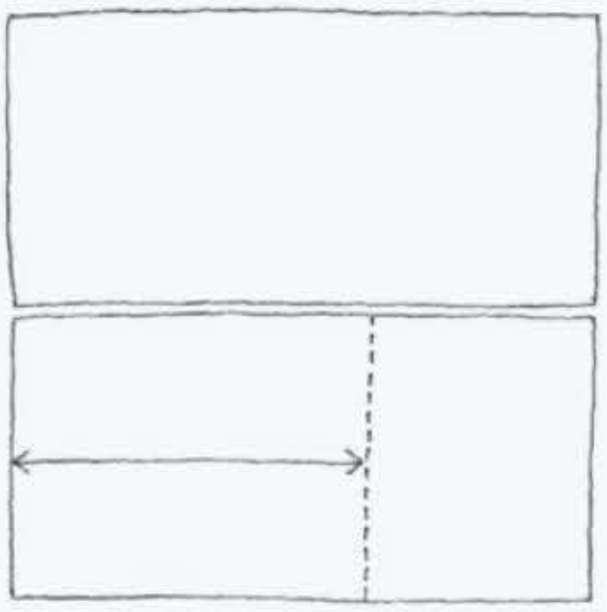


fig 1



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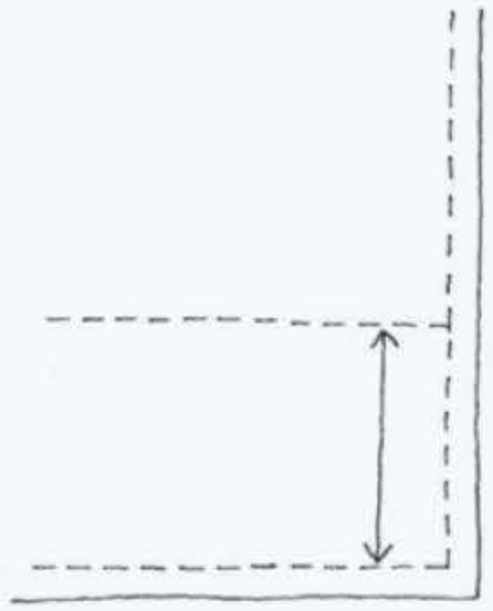


fig 3

“BOLD PRINTS CAN REALLY SHINE, AND THIS REVERSIBLE PATTERN IS SURE TO BECOME A FIRM FAVOURITE”

INNER BAG

12 With the lining panels RS together, pin the left, right and bottom edges making sure to match up the tops of your pockets on each side. Sew along those three edges leaving the top edge open. The piping might be a little bulky on the side, so stitch slowly over the spot where the two pockets meet.

13 Snip both corners making sure to not cut through your stitching.

14 To box out the bottom of the bag, pinch the corners so that the side seams match up. (It will form a triangle point.) You should be able to nest your side seams together so that they match up exactly for this step. Because of the snipped corner, you can make the seams lay in opposite directions to fit together better. Once your seams are matched, pin them in place.

15 Repeat this on the opposite side of the bag.

16 Using a ruler, measure 5cm (2in) from the point and mark a chalk line. You can use the side seam stitching as a straight edge to line up the ruler. Sew this line in place (**fig 4**).

17 Trim the point about 0.5cm (¼in) from your stitch line (**fig 5**).

18 Repeat these steps for the second corner.

OUTER BODY PANELS

19 With right sides together, sew one outer body upper piece to one outer body lower piece. Make sure to orient them correctly so they don't end up upside down! Repeat these steps for both sets of outer panel pieces.

20 Press seam toward the contrast side. Topstitch this in place 0.5cm (¼in) from the seam on the contrast side. The finished pieces should measure 51cm (20in) long.

21 With RS together, pin outer panel pieces together leaving top edge open. Be sure to match up your seams. Repeat the steps above to box out the corners. You should have two formed bags with raw edges at the top.

STRAPS

22 Fold each of the long sides of your straps 0.5cm (¼in) toward the wrong side and press. Do this down the entire length of the strap (**fig 6**). Now press the strips in half and create a centre crease.

23 Lay your 2.5cm (1in) strip of interfacing on the inside of the strip, under one of the 0.5cm (¼in) flaps. Iron in place. Using a 0.5cm (¼in) seam, topstitch the long edge shut on each strip. If you want, topstitch along both edges for a more finished look. Repeat these steps for both strap pieces.

ASSEMBLY

24 With your outer bag inside out and your lining bag RS out, put the lining down inside the outer bag so RS are together. Match up your side seams and pin in place.

25 Before you stitch them in place, you need to put in your strap pieces. Decide where you want the straps to be and make a mark to line them up. Here, we measured 5cm (2in) from the side seam and made a pencil marking.

26 Line up your straps with your markings and insert them between the bag layers, making sure to not twist them. Pin them in place with about 1cm (½in) showing above the bag edge.

27 Mark a start and stop point for your stitching between the straps on one side of the bag. This will be your turning gap. (Be sure to reinforce your stitching on either side of the gap so that your stitches do not pull loose when turning the bag right side out.) Stitch around the top making sure to catch and secure all four straps. Turn your bag right side out. Once flipped, press the top seam making sure to fold under the edges of your open turning hole.

28 Using a 0.5cm (¼in) seam, topstitch around the top of the bag. Add a second line of topstitching if you wish.

BIRCH FABRICS

This pretty tote bag was designed by Christina McKinney for Birch Fabrics, a Californian company which sells 100% organic cotton prints. The company is passionate about sustainability, using low-impact dyes, and specialises in a retro style mixed with whimsical accents. *www.birchfabrics.com*

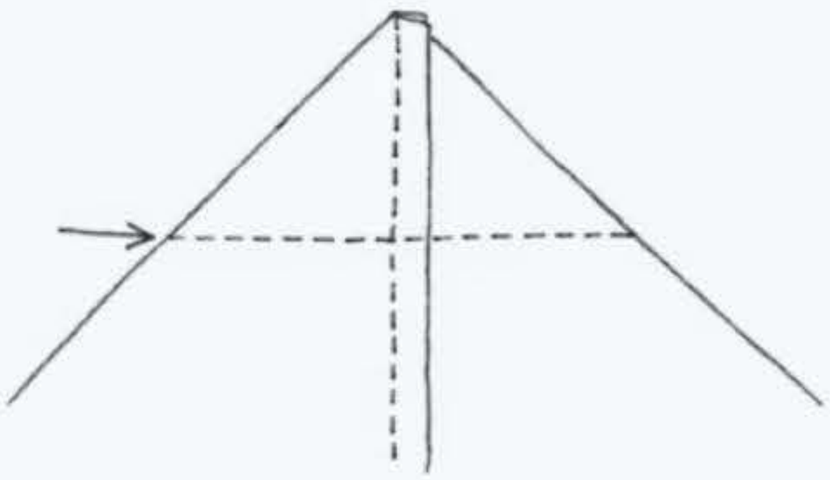


fig 4

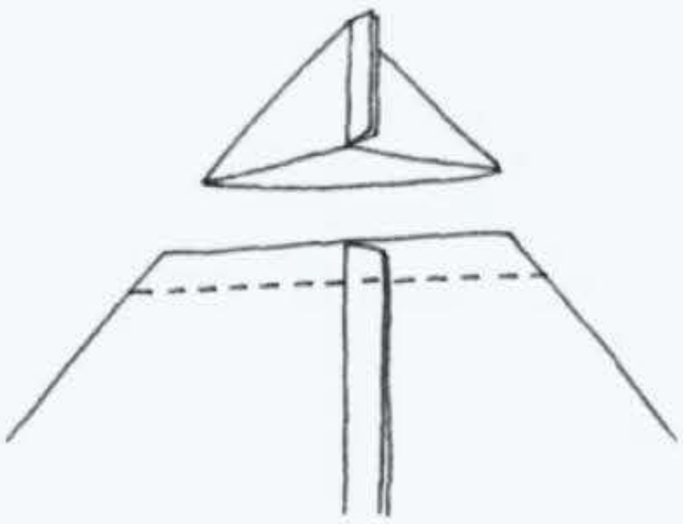


fig 5

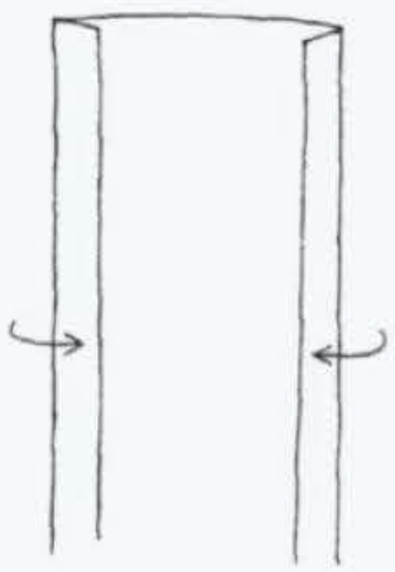


fig 6

“PINCH THE CORNERS SO THAT THE SIDE SEAMS MATCH UP, FORMING A TRIANGLE POINT”

Expert GUIDE

PIPING CORD

Follow our simple steps to give your homeware projects a professional finishing touch.

Covered piping adds the perfect finishing touch to the edges of a cushion cover or soft furnishing item. The beauty of it is that you can use any fabric to either match your cushion exactly, or choose to highlight the piped edge with a contrasting or complementary fabric. Follow these simple steps for making perfect piping to give a neat professional finish and really show off your finished stitching.

MEASURING UP

1. To calculate how much fabric and cord you need, firstly measure all round your cushion and add 15cm (6in) to this measurement. This is the length of fabric strip and also the length of piping cord you will need.
2. To calculate the width of the fabric strip you'll need, measure the circumference of the piping cord and add 3cm (1in) to this to give you two 1.5cm (½in) seam allowances.

CUTTING OUT

1. Using these measurements cut your fabric strip to the length and width required for your pattern.

Note: It's important to cut the strips on the bias, which means diagonally, across your piece of fabric. This is because fabric cut this way has more stretch so will go round curves or corners more easily and look neater.

2. You will probably have to join strips to get the correct length. Remember to add 8cm (3in) to each strip as some will be lost when you join them
3. You need to cut your strips at 45˚ to the selvedge and the length of these strips will depend on the size of your fabric. To find the fabric bias fold the raw edge of the fabric diagonally so it lies along the selvedge edge. Press along this diagonal fold to make the bias of the fabric. Now unfold the fabric and measure the strips either side of this crease.
4. Draw the cutting lines for the strips on to the wrong side of the fabric then cut them out.

NEATER CORNERS

For a neater corner with less fabric bulk and puckering you can cut the corner into a curve. Before you attach your piping strip draw a small curve (use an egg cup or small teacup) on each corner of the cushion front and cut round it. This won't really affect the shape of the cushion but make the piping ease round the corner more neatly. Snip the piping at intervals round the corner to help it lie flat.

JOINING STRIPS

1. You should always join strips together at right angles so that the seam isn't as bulky and is less visible.
2. Take two strips and place them right sides together at right angles.
3. Draw a line in pencil across the top

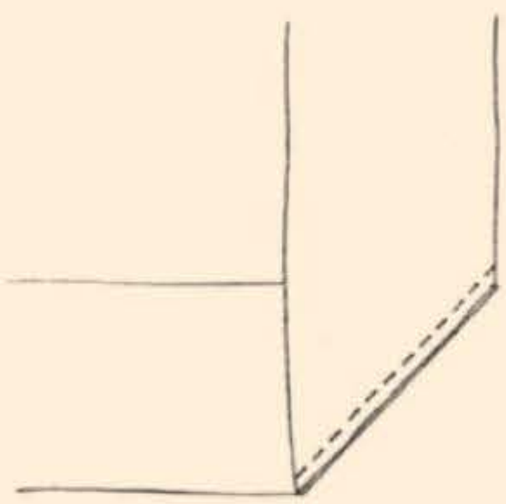


fig 1

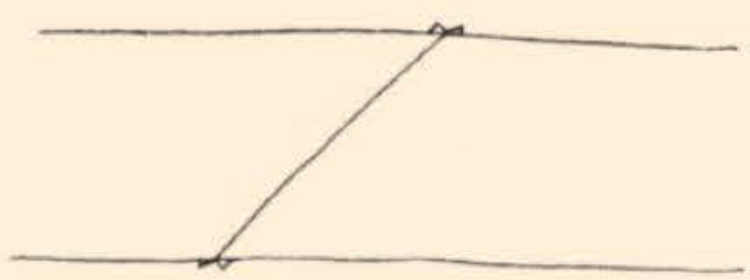


fig 2

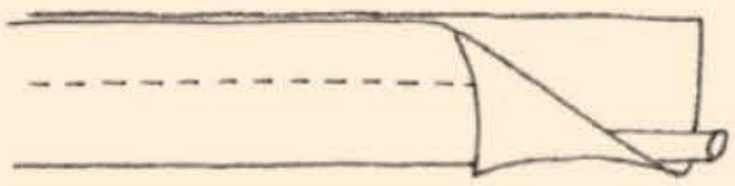


fig 3

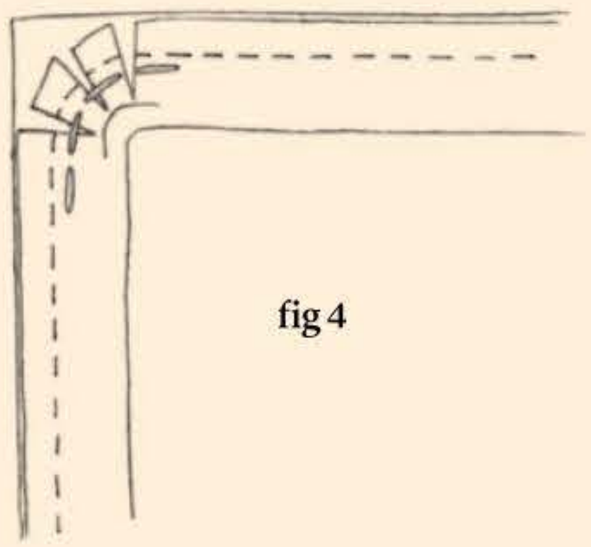


fig 4

strip from the top left corner to the right side where the two strips meet.

4 Now stitch along this drawn line **(fig 1)**.

5 Trim the seam to 6mm (¼in) and press the seam open **(fig 2)**.

6 Repeat this process with all your strips to form one long strip.

INSERTING THE PIPING CORD

1 Fold your joined fabric strip in half lengthways with wrong sides together then place the piping cord inside right up to the fold.

2 Machine stitch the strip together 6mm (¼in) from the raw edges to hold the cord in place. These stitches won't be seen once the strip is attached to the cushion **(fig 3)**.

ATTACHING THE COVERED CORD TO YOUR CUSHION FRONT

1 Mark, with a pin, the centre of the bottom edge of the cushion front.

2 Pin one end of the covered cord to this point, matching the raw edges of the piping strip to the cushion front.

3 Starting 10cm (4in) away from this point tack your piping strip to the cushion front close to the machine stitching.

4 When you reach a corner, snip the piping strip almost down to the cord, then turn it round the corner and tack this corner firmly in place right up to the cord **(fig 4)**.

5 Now continue tacking the piping strip all the way round your cushion front in the same way until you reach 10cm (4in) from the other side of the centre pin.

JOINING THE ENDS

1 Overlap one end of the fabric over the other and mark where they cross at the central pin with pencil on the wrong side of both fabric strips **(fig 5)**.

2 Place the two ends right sides together and machine stitch along these pencil lines. Trim the seam and press open **(fig 6)**.

3 To join the piping cord, trim the cord so that it overlaps by 2.5cm (1in)

4 Just for the length the cords overlap, remove half of the strands from each cord by snipping them and pulling them out **(fig 7)**.

5 Twist the two ends together and they will have the same number of strands combined as the rest of the cord. Take a strip of microporous tape and wrap this round the join to seal and secure it **(fig 8)**.

6 Now place the joined cord inside the fold of the joined fabric strip and tack in place and to the cushion front.

STITCHING THE COVERED PIPING TO YOUR CUSHION FRONT

1 Insert the zip into your cushion back then place it right sides together on top of the cushion front and covered piping and pin into place.

2 You need to stitch as close up to the piping cord as possible to achieve a neat and tight finish.

3 Stitch slowly and carefully around the cushion. When you reach the corners ensure the piping cord is pushed to the inside of the cushion so you don't stitch through it at all.

4 Turn your cushion cover right sides out and remove any visible tacking stitches to complete.

CHOOSING YOUR SEWING MACHINE FOOT

ORDINARY SEWING FOOT

If you use an ordinary sewing machine foot you won't be able to get as close to the cord and the fabric strip will hang around it making it look messy.

ZIPPER FOOT

This will allow your needle to get closer to the cord. If you have a setting on your machine to alter needle position, move it so it's as close to the cord as possible.

PIPING FOOT

This is the best machine foot for attaching piping. It has a ridge in it which sits on top of the cord. This allows the needle to stitch right next to the cord and holds it firmly in place as you're stitching.

CHOOSING YOUR PIPING CORD

Piping cord comes in a range of thicknesses – try numbers 3–5. The smaller the item, the thinner the piping you should use. You can buy cotton twist cord or synthetic – either works well so experiment to see which you prefer.

PREPARING YOUR CORD

It's important that you use preshrunk cotton cord or it may pucker when washed. Some cord comes preshrunk so do check. To shrink cord, place it in a saucepan, cover with water then boil for 5 minutes. Make sure it's completely dry. It can shrink by up to 10% so buy extra cord to allow for this.

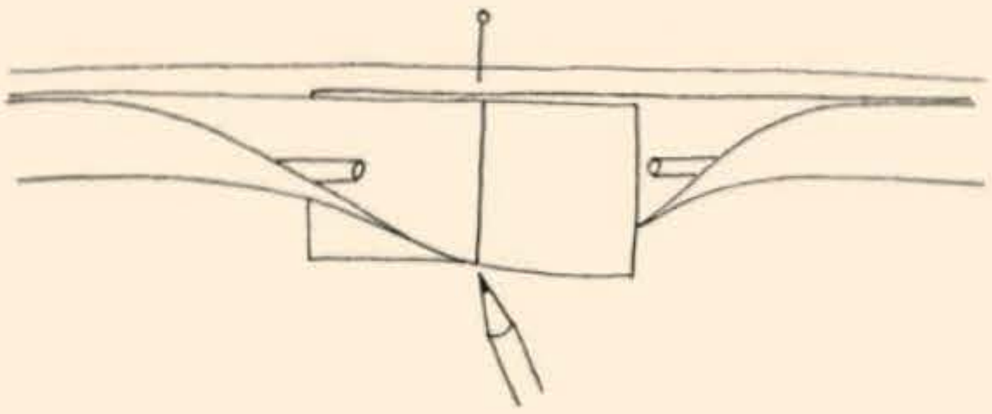


fig 5

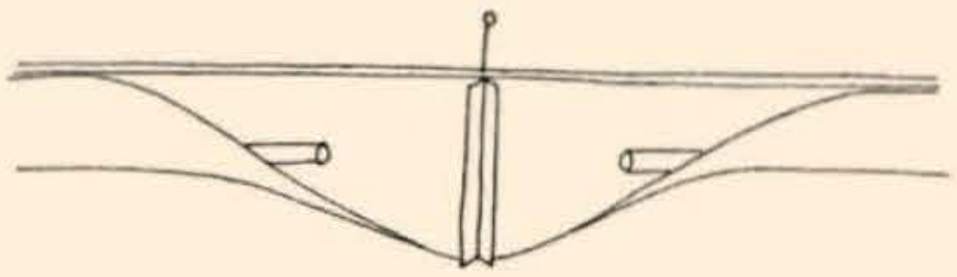


fig 6

fig 7

fig 8

Quilted Sewing Machine Cover

Protect your machine with a perfectly fitting, pretty-as-a-picture quilted cover.

YOUR SEWING MACHINE is probably one of your best loved and most used pieces of equipment, but chances are you're not taking care of it the way you should. Don't be offended – most people don't find the time to really look after their machine.

It's easy for dust and dirt to get stuck amongst the machine's mechanisms, slowing it down, and eventually to a halt. The simplest way to keep your machine in its best working order is to cover it up to protect it when you're not sewing. This quilted sewing machine cover is custom-made for your machine, so it's guaranteed to fit. Adding a touch of patchwork from fabric you really love allows you to have something super pretty, that also does something super important. It's the best combination when making things, and one your sewing machine is sure to appreciate.

PREPARE THE PATCHWORK

1 Begin by cutting your print fabrics into squares measuring 10.8 x 10.8cm (4¼ x 4¼in). For the average sewing machine, you'll need nine to twelve squares of this dimension. Repeat with the same number of squares in white fabric (or a colour or print to match the body of the cover).

Pair one print square with one solid square and make a half-square triangle (see below). Cut the two halves apart on the cut line to divide your HSTs. Press seam allowances to one side. Repeat until all your squares have been paired (**fig 1**).

2 Mix and match your prints until they're pleasing to the eye, and then pair your HSTs up to make QSTs (see overleaf). Cut the two halves apart on the cut line to divide your QSTs. Press seam allowances to one side. Repeat until all your HSTs have been paired into QSTs (**fig 2**).

3 Stack your QSTs one above the other to make a column, arranging them until you're happy with how the prints relate to one another – not too many of the same fabric right up next to one another, a good balance of light and dark, that kind of thing.

4 Sew each square to the next one in the column until you have one long strip of patchwork. Press your seam allowances open. Your finished patchwork strip should measure 8.9cm (3½in) wide, with each QST square measuring 7.6cm (3in) high (if not, no biggie – we're about to pop this patchwork strip into another piece of fabric, so you'll have plenty of time to customise the fit).

ASSEMBLE CENTRAL PANEL

5 Start by measuring the front of your machine. Measure the width (from side to side, taking into account any little bits that stick out like a cord or spool holder) and the height from base to top, again taking into account anything that might stick up.

6 Turn to the side of the machine and measure the depth from front to back at its widest point. Then measure the length over the top of the machine, from the lower front up over the top then back down to the base at the back. Note down these measurements.

Now, to each of the measurements above add 3.8cm (1½in) – that's 1.3cm (½in) for each side, for a total of total of 1.3cm (½in) and 2.5cm (1in) for ease. Ease is that little ▶

YOU WILL NEED

- 0.91m (1yd) of solid fabric for the body of the cover
- 0.91m (1yd) of cotton batting, can be fusible
- Scraps of cotton prints at least 11.5cm (4½in) square for the patchwork
- Thread to match the body fabric
- 1.8m (2yds) of piping filler cord, 4.5mm (¼in) or smaller
- Contrasting fabric made into bias tape, 4.6m (5yds) total, 0.46m (½yd) will make enough

For stockist details, see page 160

fig 1

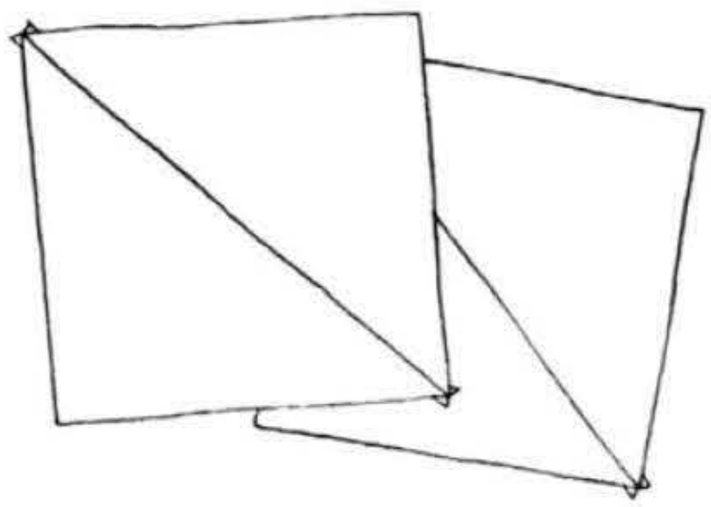
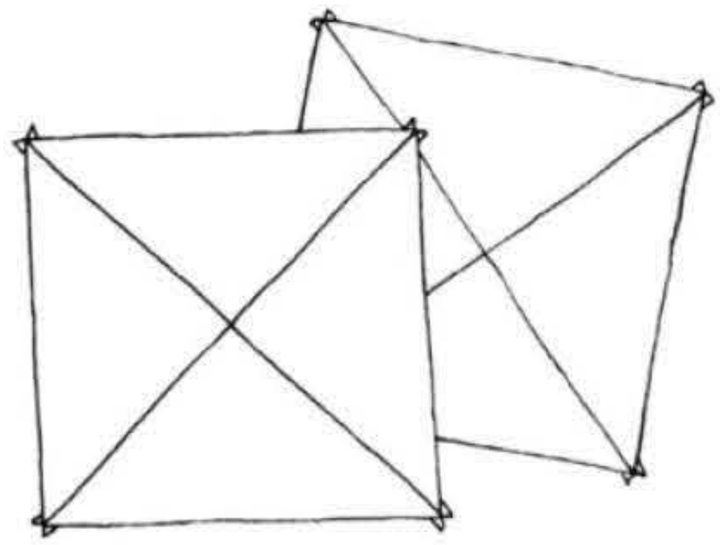


fig 2



HALF-SQUARE TRIANGLES

To make half-square triangles, or HSTs, we'll use a little trick that will make things much simpler, and is easier than it looks.

1 Begin with the squares cut to size. Take one square of your background fabric and another of your print, then place them right sides together.

2 Draw a line from corner to corner, diagonally across the wrong side of one square – it doesn't matter which, but we generally use the solid.

3 With the fabrics clutched together (pressing and steaming them slightly can hold them well), take your squares to the sewing machine. Stitch a seam 6mm (¼in) from the line you drew – place the line at the edge of your 6mm (¼in) presser foot as a guide.

4 Now, stitch a second seam to the opposite side of the drawn line (fig 3).

5 Back at the cutting mat, cut along the drawn line between the two rows of stitching so you have two squares each composed of a solid triangle and a print triangle. Press your seam allowances (fig 4). And there you go – perfect HSTs, without the effort!

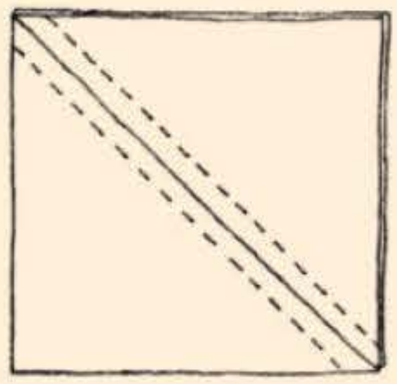


fig 3

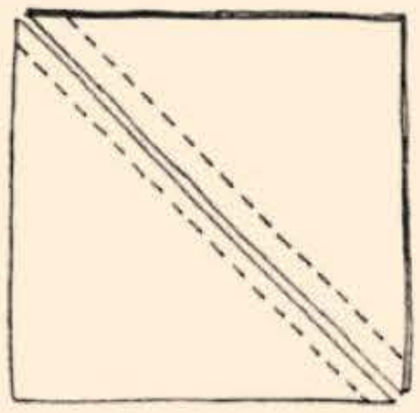


fig 4

extra bit of room that will allow you to get your cover on and off your machine. Make a note of these new measurements, and be sure to differentiate them from the ones without seam allowances!

7 From your solid (or main) fabric, cut out the following pieces using the measurements you've noted (shown in brackets): two large pieces for the centre panel (width x over the top); four smaller pieces for the side panels (depth x height). Set these aside.

Take one of the centre panel pieces and cut it in half so you can add the patchwork strip to it. Determine where along the panel you want to place the patchwork. With your ruler, mark a line from bottom to top of the solid fabric. Cut along this line to divide the fabric into two pieces.

8 You will find that your patchwork strip has little "ears" from all those seams. Lay it flat on your cutting surface and trim those edges so they're clean and straight.

9 With the centre panel fabric pieces RS up, place the patchwork strip on one panel piece, right sides together and raw edges even. Pin along the raw edge; stitch a 6.4mm (¼in) seam. Repeat with the other panel piece on the opposite long raw edge of the patchwork. When finished, you should have a panel that looks as ours does. Press both long seam allowances open (**fig 5**).

10 Your panel is now substantially larger, so trim it back down to ensure both centre panel pieces are the same size. Take the other centre panel piece that you cut (in step 3) and lay it on top of the patchwork panel you've just finished Using the second, smaller piece as a template, adjust the placement of the patchwork strip until it's where you like it best. Then simply trim the excess off the edges of the larger piece so that both panel pieces are the same size.

QUILTING

11 Begin by cutting your batting. You'll need one piece cut the same size as your centre panel pieces (width x over-the-top measurements) and two pieces the same size as your side panel pieces (height x depth measurements).

12 Make a quilt sandwich using the solid piece of fabric (the "backing"), the batting, and the patchwork (the "quilt top"). Pin baste together. Repeat this step with the two side panels. Set all three pieces aside.

13 To mark your quilting lines, place the centre patchwork panel right-side up on a flat surface. Using a ruler, mark a line across the body of the panel near the centre that runs parallel to one of the diagonal seamlines in the QSTs. Make sure the line runs all the way from side to side across the centre(ish) of the panel – we'll be working toward the edges from this line.

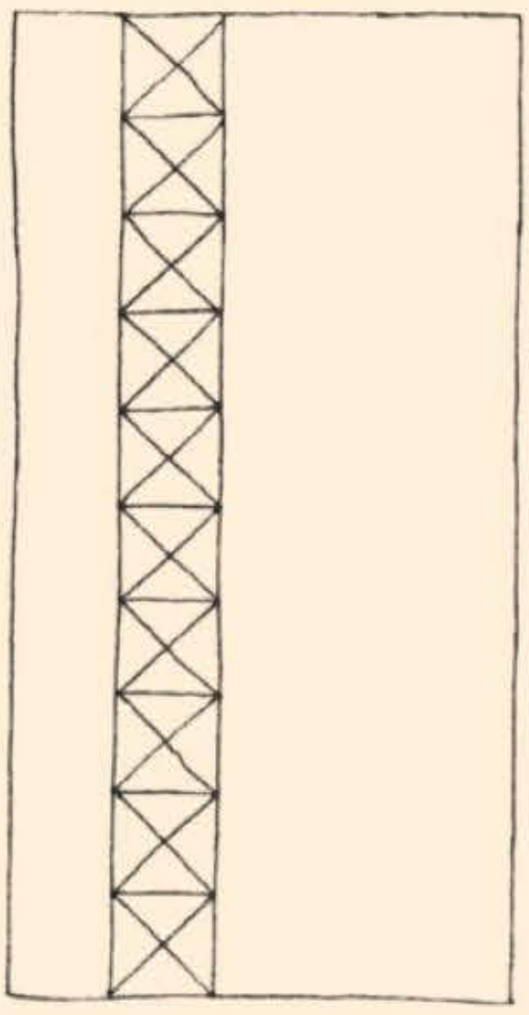
CHAIN STITCHING

Chain stitching is a handy trick that can speed up your piecing and patchwork by allowing you to avoid cutting threads and lifting your presser foot in between seams.

To chain piece, begin by sewing a seam. Then, instead of taking the sewing off the machine, allow it to go past the needle and slip the next piece to be stitched under the toes of the presser foot, taking care to avoid letting the two pieces overlap. Now sew the next seam. You'll find that the "air" between the two pieces is "invisible" to the machine—your needle goes right over it as though there is no gap at all! Now the two pieces are connected by a short piece of thread, just three or four stitches' worth. You can keep adding seams, all connected by a bit of thread, until you're done. Then remove them from the machine and snip the threads – easy.

If you're making a lot of half-square triangles using our technique on the previous page, try stitching all the seams on one side of the centre, diagonal line with chain stitches, then turn it all around and stitch all the seams on the other side of the line the same way. Fast and easy!

fig 5



QUARTER-SQUARE TRIANGLES

Quarter-square triangles (or QSTs), the experienced older cousin of the HST, are made from two HSTs sewn together.

1 Begin with two HSTs (that is, a square piece of fabric made up of two HSTs), and place that piece right sides together with another square of HSTs, with their seams directly on top of one another. Be sure to arrange them so that the solid is touching a print each side of the seam. Draw a diagonal line from corner to corner perpendicular to the seam – it should cross the seam at the centre, not be parallel to it.

2 Sew 6mm (¼in) seams to either side of this line, as with the HST. Then cut along the line you drew. You'll end up with two squares made up of four triangles, each of which has one small triangle of each of the fabrics in your HSTs (figs 6 and 7).

fig 6

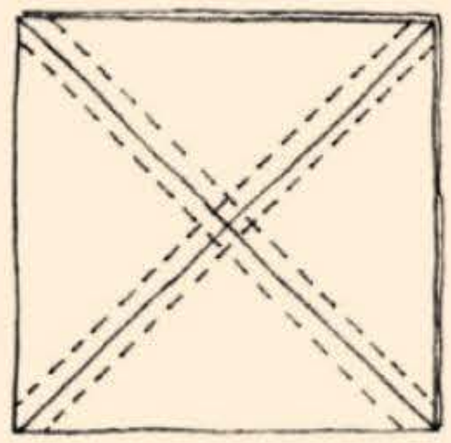
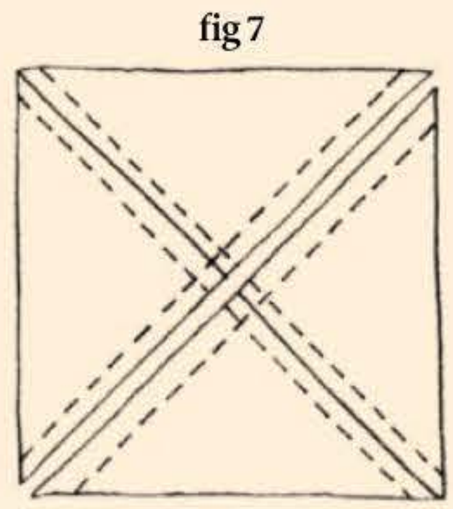


fig 7



14 With the toes of your walking foot on either side of the line you've marked, stitch your first row of quilting stitches. Stitches at the very edge of the quilt sandwich will be hidden in the binding later, so be sure to start as close to the edge as you reasonably can to ensure that you don't have chunks unquilted later.

Then, using the guidebar on your walking foot, continue to stitch rows of quilting stitches parallel to the first line, working your way across the panel sewing each line of quilting in the opposite direction of the previous one. The distance between lines is completely up to you – here, the guidebar has been set to about 3.2cm (1¼in) because the designer loves the narrow look of the parallel lines, but you could set it to a measurement you prefer.

15 After a few rows of this, you'll begin to find that the shape of the centre panel is awkward to continue to push under the arm of the sewing machine – that's fine, because we want to leave a corner section without straight-line quilting so we can go back and add a free-motion quilted detail. Stop making straight lines when you're ready (it's probably best if you keep going until you've stitched straight lines past all the QSTs on one end of the QST strip, just for continuity).

Remove the panel from the machine, flip it 180 degrees, and begin again at the centre line, working your way across the panel with your walking foot and guidebar, until you've reached the opposite end, again leaving a corner unquilted for later.

16 Once all the straight rows are quilted, we're ready to complete the two sections you set aside to be free-motion quilted. Work across the unquilted section of the centre panel until you've covered all of it. Quilt the entire section, then repeat on the opposite side.

ADD THE PIPING

17 Trim the seam allowance of the piping to 6.4mm (¼in). Lay one side panel flat on your work surface. Beginning at the bottom edge, pin piping in place with raw edges together and the piping cording toward the centre of the side panel. At each corner, snip 6.4mm (¼in) from the edge, up to the stitches but not through them, and 'break' the piping to neatly turn the corner (**fig 8**).

18 Baste the piping in place, sewing as close to the cording as the machine will allow, using your longest straight stitch. Repeat on the other side panel.

19 Take your centre panel and place it patchwork side up and raw edges together with one piped side panel. (Pin them together if you like, but you don't need to.) At your sewing machine, stitch a 6.4mm (¼in) seam – right up against the piping cording – all the way around, matching the raw edges and manipulating the centre panel as you go, to create a boxed end with the side panel. Repeat with the other side panel. Do not clip corners. Remove any visible basting stitches once the piping is installed.

BIND THE SEAMS

20 Open the double-fold bias tape and lay it right sides together with the centre panel at the seam it shares with the side panel. Beginning at the lower edge, pin all along the seam allowance, raw edges even, from lower front to lower back. Stitch in the fold. Repeat on the opposite side.

21 Fold the bias tape over the seam allowance, catching it inside the "clamshell" when the opposite, folded edge of the bias tape lands outside the seam line. Pin in place, then topstitch all along the length of bias tape to bind the seam allowances inside your pretty bias tape. Repeat on the opposite side.

22 To finish off the lower edge of the cover, repeat the above steps to bind the raw edge. At the beginning, leave 7.6cm-10.2cm (3-4in) unstitched. When you come back around to where you began, fold the unstitched end under, then lay the opposite end on top. As you wrap the bias tape around to the opposite side, this will prevent any raw edges from peeking out. Topstitch in place and you're done!

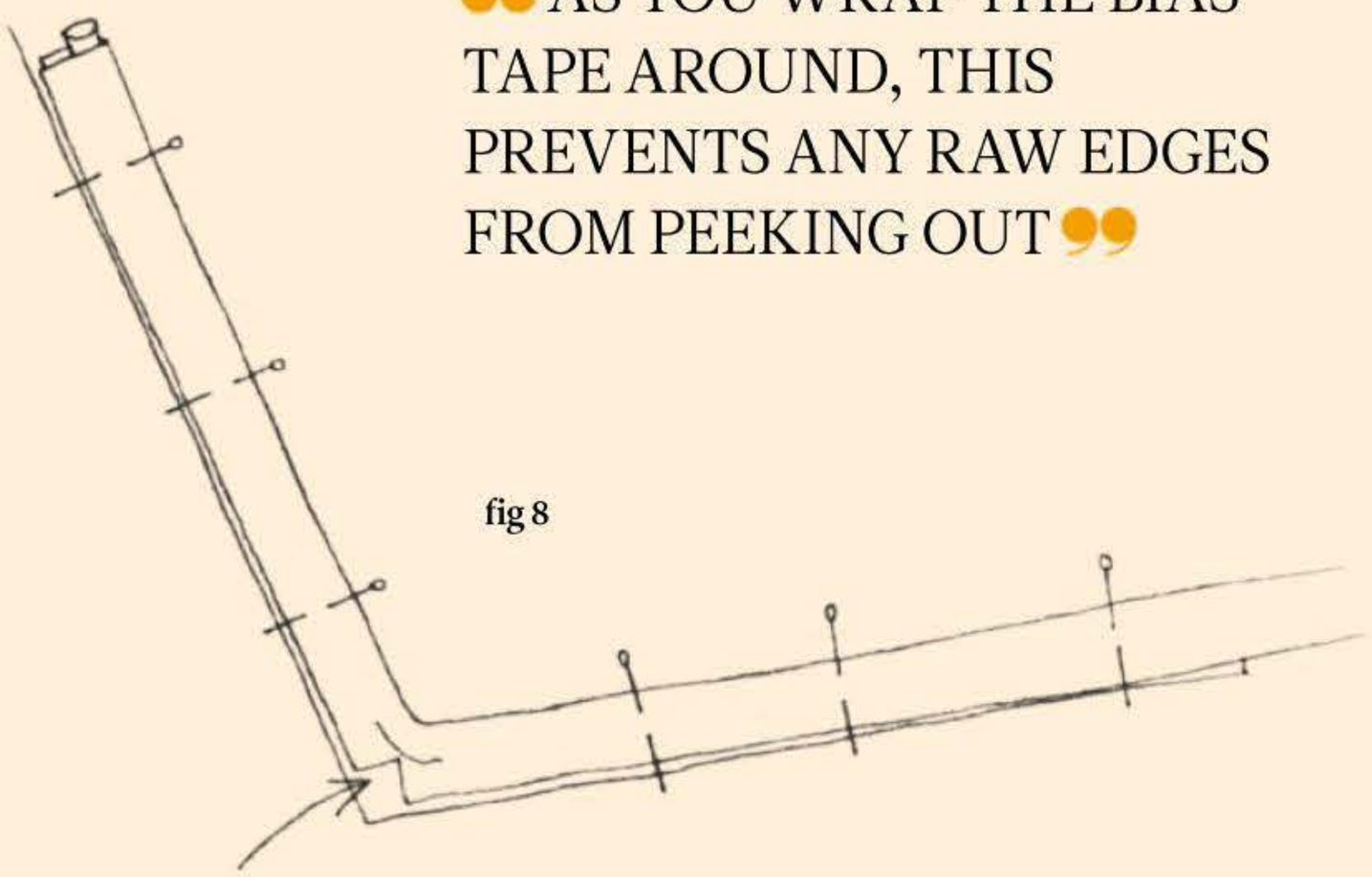


fig 8

> "AS YOU WRAP THE BIAS TAPE AROUND, THIS PREVENTS ANY RAW EDGES FROM PEEKING OUT"

STITCH SAVVY

A collection of 25 projects by designer Deborah Moebes, designed to take your sewing to the next level. *Stitch Savvy* (Krause Publications, £19.99) is aimed at intermediate stitchers who are looking to improve. The book works through five categories (home decor, handbags, children's, quilting and clothing), while focusing on different techniques. A bonus CD includes PDF patterns for 13 additional projects.

Crossroads Pillow

This elegant cushion uses matching strips and piping for a co-ordinated look.

BRING A TOUCH of elegance and a huge splash of colour to your home with this patchwork throw pillow from Art Gallery Fabrics. Using their intense "Hyperreal Garden" range of fabrics, it's sure to be a talking point.

The pillow has a patchwork front and plain back that's finished off beautifully with matching piping, carefully covered in a delicately striped fabric. It's a great chance to practise a variety of your sewing skills, from patchwork to piping. And though the version seen here is fully sewn up when complete, you could always add in a zip to make it easy to wash later – ideal if you have small children! Turn to page 48 for more information on inserting zips if you're unsure.

CUTTING DIRECTIONS

FOR ALL BLOCKS CUT (8 blocks total):

Four 27.5 x 6.5cm (10⅞ x 2½in) strips from fabric B.

Four 27.5 x 6.5cm (10⅞ x 2½in) strips from fabric C.

Four 27.5 x 6.5cm (10⅞ x 2½in) strips from fabric G.

Four 27.5 x 6.5cm (10⅞ x 2½in) strips from fabric H.

Eight 29 x 2cm (11½ x ⅞in) strips from fabric E.

One 62 x 32cm (24½ x 12½in) rectangle from fabric E.

Two 10cm (3⅞in) squares from fabric A (cut them once diagonally to get four triangles).

Two 10cm (3⅞in) squares from fabric D (cut them once diagonally to get four triangles).

Two 10cm (3⅞in) squares from fabric F (cut them once diagonally to get four triangles).

Two 10cm (3⅞in) squares from fabric I (cut them once diagonally to get four triangles).

FOR PIPING CUT

One 203 x 4cm (80 x 1½in) strip from fabric E*.

* In order to get this long strip you will need to join two or more strips together.

BLOCKS CONSTRUCTION

All eight blocks are constructed the same way. Sew all fabrics right sides together.

FOR ALL BLOCKS

1 The secret to all the blocks is to make a crease on the centre half (lengthwise) on every strip and triangle. You can do this with your finger or an iron (**fig 1**).

Combination 1:

2 Position one fabric D triangle on top of one fabric C strip, right sides facing and raw edges aligned. Match both creases and pin. Sew along the entire edge with a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance (**fig 2**). Press open (**fig 3**).

Note: You will notice that the strip is longer than the triangle. Don't worry; just match the creases. You will trim the excess fabric later to get a square block.

3 Repeat this step with one fabric E strip on top of the fabric C strip.

4 Repeat with a fabric B strip on top of the fabric E strip.

5 Position one fabric A triangle on top of fabric B strip, right sides facing and raw edges aligned. Match both creases and pin. Sew along the entire edge with a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance (**fig 4**).

6 Make three more blocks the same way. ▶

YOU WILL NEED

Art Gallery Fabrics, Hyperreal Garden by Pat Bravo. Fabric is 114cm (45in) wide.

- Fabric A HG-8403 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric B HG-7401 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric C HG-7400 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric D HG-7405 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric E HG-7408 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric F HG-7403 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric G HG-7402 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric H HG-7404 23 x 56cm (9 x 22in)
- Fabric I HG-8407 34cm (⅜yd)
- Pillow form 30.5 x 61cm (12 x 24in)
- 1m (1⅛yd) piping cord, 6mm (¼in) thick

FINISHED SIZE

- 30.5 x 61cm (12 x 24in)

For stockist details, see page 160

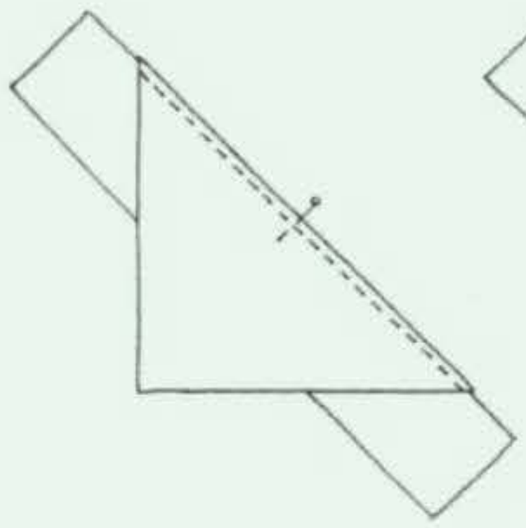


fig 1

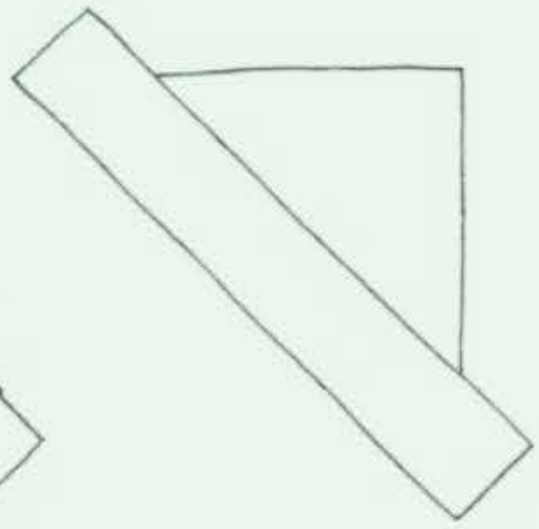


fig 2

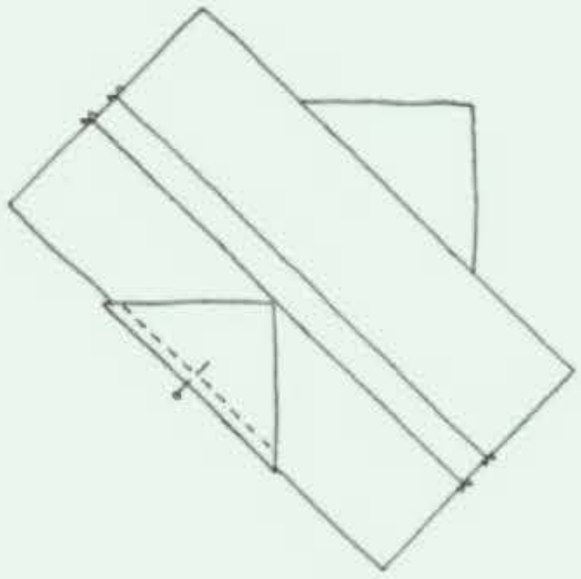


fig 3

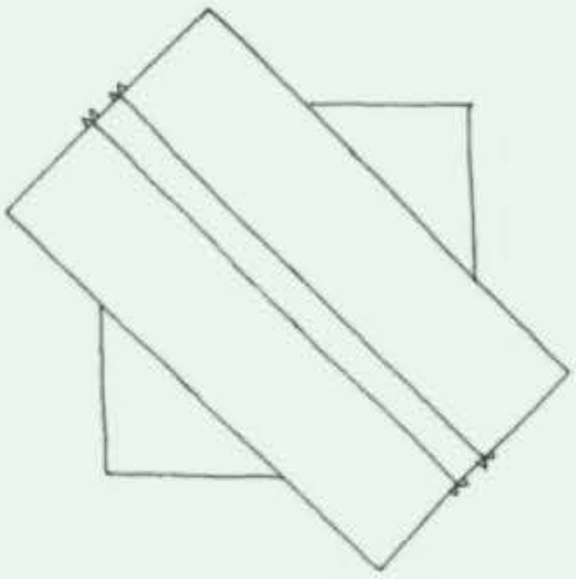


fig 4

Combination 2:

7 Follow same steps using the fabrics shown (**fig 5**). Make a total of four blocks.

TRIMMING THE BLOCKS

8 Position a 16.5cm (6½in) square ruler over one block. Be sure that the corners of the ruler meet the corners of the two triangles of the block.

9 Holding the ruler firmly in place, trim borders with a rotary cutter to a 16.5cm (6½in) finished size block (**fig 6**). Then trim, in the same way, all eight blocks.

ASSEMBLING PILLOW FRONT

10 Begin sewing the first row. Rotate and alternate the blocks as shown (**fig 7**). Sew four blocks for the first row. Make the remaining row in the same way.

11 Sew the rows together. Take care to match seam intersections between each block (lock them with pins if necessary).

12 Press all seams in the same direction. Press the whole top with a hot steam iron.

MAKE PIPING PIECE

13 Lay the long strip flat, right side down. Place the cording piece along the centre, aligning the beginning of both.

14 Wrap the fabric around the cording as you work. Using your zipper foot, baste down the entire length of the strip roughly 3mm (⅛in) from the cording. Trim the seam allowance to 6mm (¼in).

ATTACH PIPING CORD

15 Place the front RS up. Pin piping piece all around sides, with raw edges aligning.

16 With your piping or zipper foot, stitch the piping piece to the fabric 6mm (¼in) from the edge. Begin stitching on the middle of one pillow side leaving a loose tail on the piping of about 2.5cm (1in).

17 When you get close to a corner, stop stitching and make two slits on the piping fabric (exactly on the corner) with a pair of scissors a bit less than 6mm (¼in) deep (be careful not to cut into the stitching line).

18 Stitch all the way around and stop 2.5cm (1in) before the meeting point. Unwrap the fabric covering the cord. Overlap the ending tail over the starting tail and cut the excess where they meet. Wrap the fabric back again and cut it 1cm (½in) passing the cord. Fold the end 6mm (¼in) inwards and wrap over the starting tail. Make sure the fabric covers the cord. Stitch the open section and backstitch ends to secure (**fig 8**).

19 Keep this unit right side up, place the fabric I square on top (RS down). With raw edges aligned, start sewing with 6mm (¼in) seam, sandwiching the piping. Sew all the way around, starting from one of the sides, and leaving a 10cm (4in) opening to insert the pillow form (**fig 9**).

20 Turn the pillow right side out and insert the pillow form, then close by hand.

ART GALLERY FABRICS

A fabric brand that's packed with vibrant colours and designs, Art Gallery Fabrics strives for a "contemporary elegant" style and has certainly succeeded. This pillow design uses prints from Pat Bravo's Hyperreal Garden range, an electrifying collection that's packed with surreal flowers and hypnotic colours. Be inspired!
www.artgalleryfabrics.com

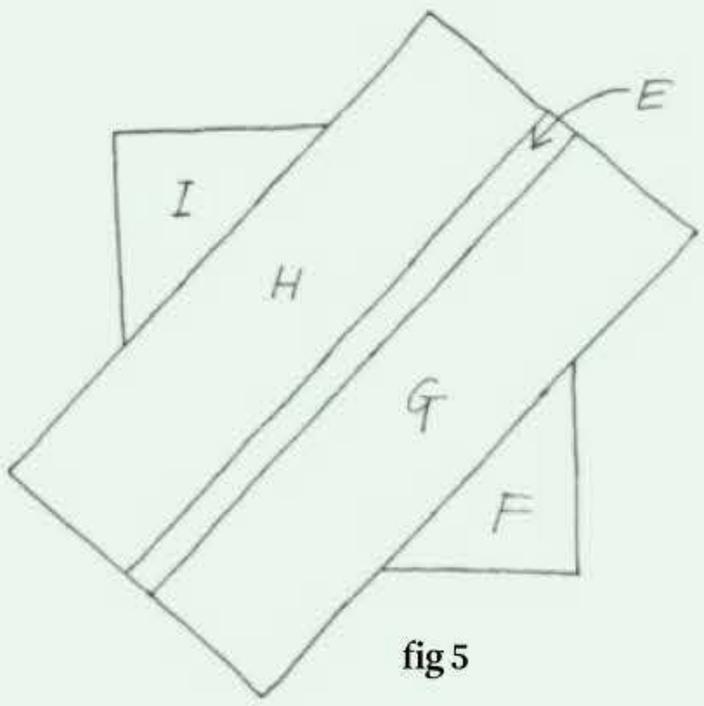


fig 5

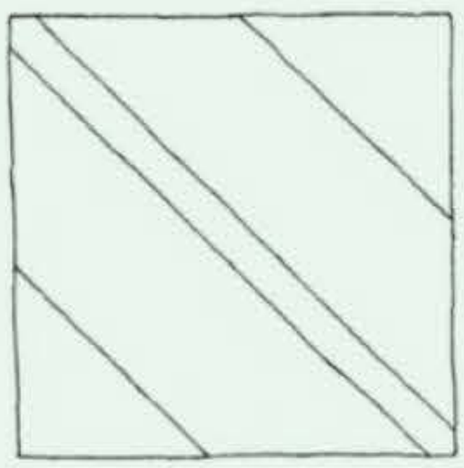


fig 6

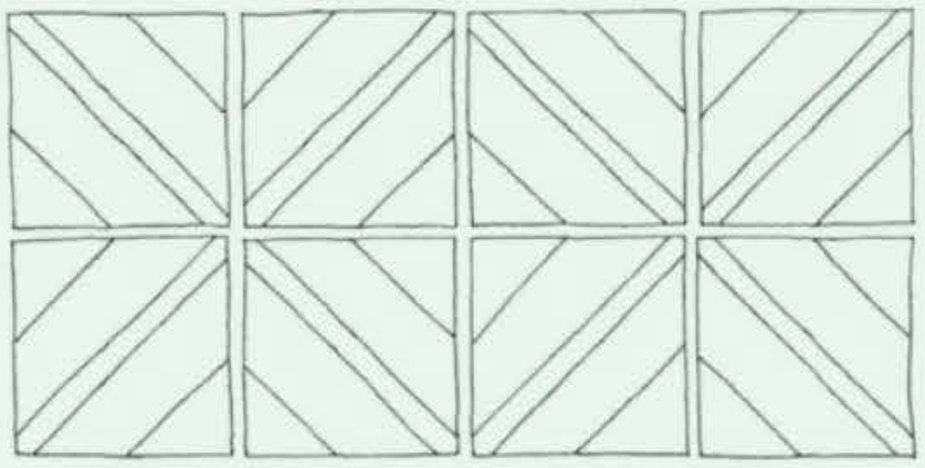


fig 7

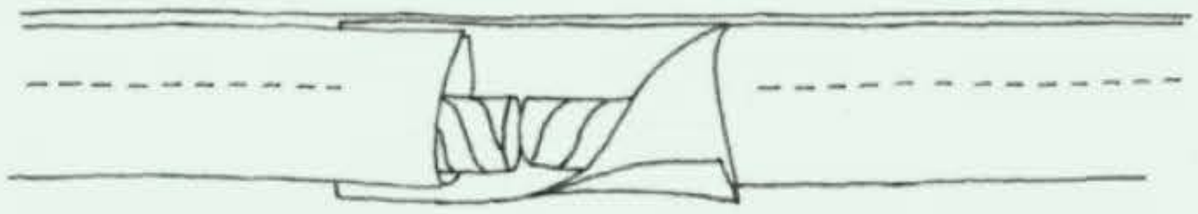


fig 8

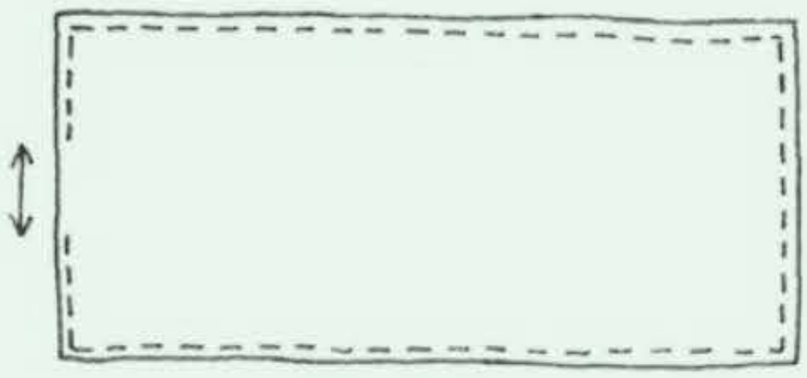


fig 9

get the look

Bright florals

Hyperreal Garden by Pat Bravo for Art Gallery Fabrics is inspired by electrifying flowers and colours.

Euphoria: Boysenberry

Mirage: Rose

Illusion: Warm

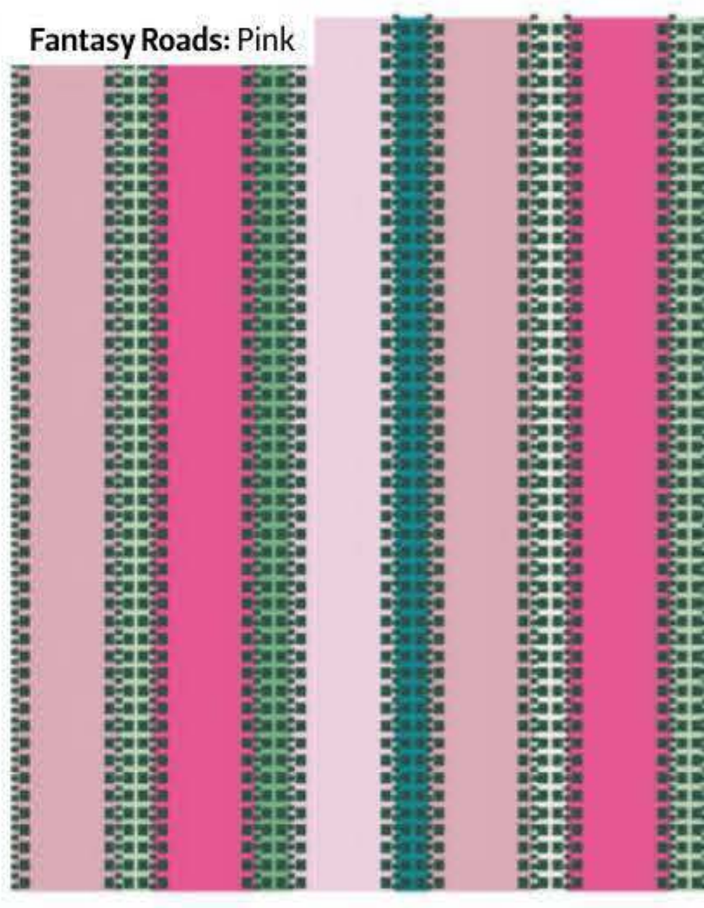
Flowershock: Apricot

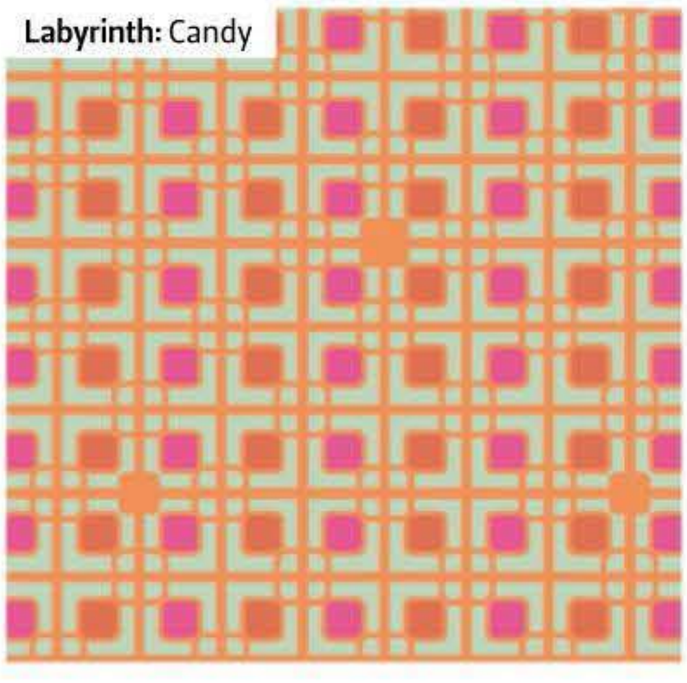
Euphoria: Juneberry

Op Art: Intense

Radiant Bouquet: Emerald

Fantasy Roads: Pink





Labyrinth: Candy

Lush Foliage: Plum

FRILLS & PLEATS

Frills and pleats add a professional finishing touch. They can take a little time, so just work slowly and methodically.

Frills can be made either from a single or double layer of fabric. First you will need to calculate how much fabric you need to cut for your frill – it should be about 1½ -2 times the length of the edge to be trimmed (for example, the circumference of a cushion) plus a 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance at either end.

SINGLE FRILL

1. Decide how wide you want your frill to be then add 1.5cm (½in) for the hem and 1.5cm (½in) for the seam allowance. Now cut a strip of your chosen fabric to the width and length measurements you have calculated.
2. Join the strip of fabric right sides together at the short ends.
3. Turn the top edge of the frill over 6mm (¼in) to the wrong side, then the same again, and stitch down to hem.
4. To make a row of gathering stitches, set your sewing machine straight stitch to its longest length and stitch all along the unhemmed edge, 6mm (¼in) in from the raw edge. If the fabric strip is quite long then it's generally best to stitch another gathering line, this time 1cm (⅜in) from the raw edges (**fig 1**).
5. Divide the fabric you are going to be attaching your frill on to into two or four, depending on its length, then divide the frill fabric in the same way and mark these points with pins.
6. Now pull up your gathering thread and adjust the gathers until the frill fabric fits exactly along your main fabric (**fig 2**).
7. Pin the frill into place on the main fabric right sides together and matching raw edges (**fig 3**).
8. Using a 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance stitch the frill to the fabric to complete.

DOUBLE FRILL

1. You need to cut your frill fabric to double the width you want the finished frill to be plus 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance.
2. Fold your frill fabric in half lengthways with wrong sides together and press.
3. Stitch gathering stitches along the length through both layers of fabric, pull up the gathers and stitch to your main fabric in exactly the same way as for the single frill.

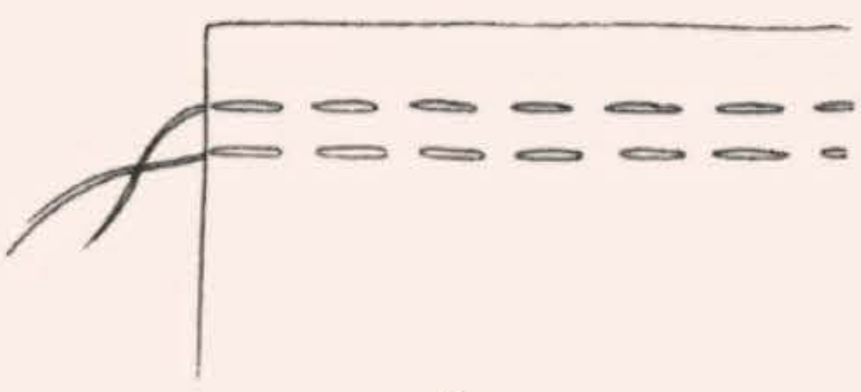


fig 1

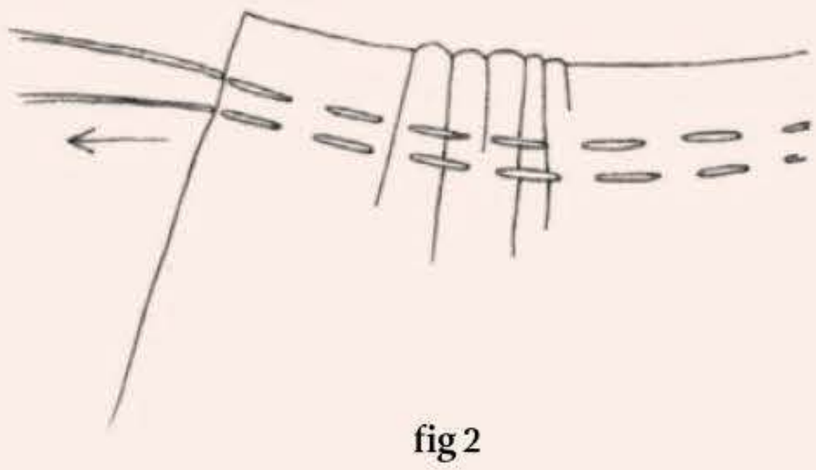


fig 2

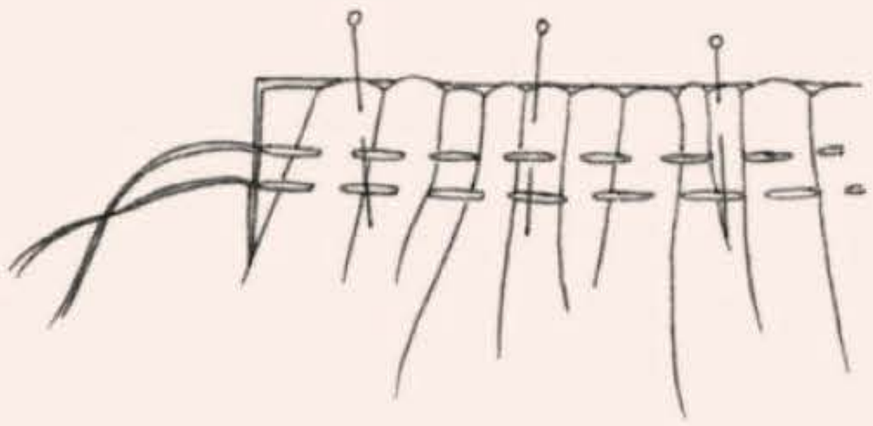


fig 3

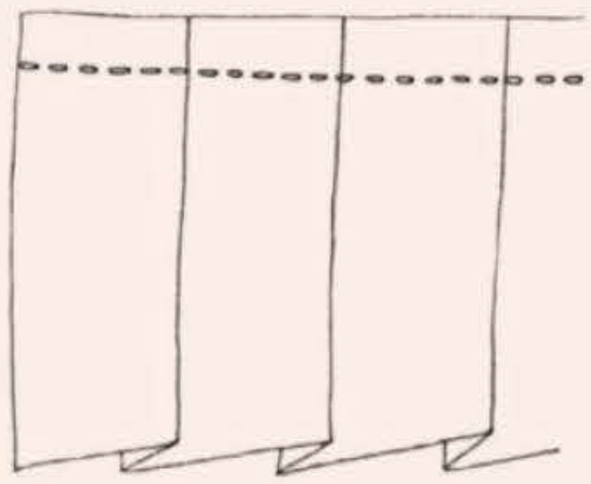


fig 4

PLEATS

Another way of adding fullness to fabric is to pleat it instead of gathering it. Pleats are ideal for soft furnishings where you want to add a little fullness round the bottom of a chair cover, for example. You can either leave pleats unpressed or press each pleat individually for a more formal look.

KNIFE PLEATS

Knife pleats have folds that all lie in one direction and are the simplest to make

How to make a knife pleat:

1. Decide how deep you want your pleat to be then double this to calculate how much extra fabric to add. For example if you want your pleat to be 4cm (1½in) wide then add 8cm (3in) to the fabric width you are using to make your finished item. Obviously you will need to also decide how many pleats you want to include and add extra on for all of them.
2. If the bottom edge of the fabric you are pleating is to be hemmed, then do this first before you pleat the fabric.
3. Measure and mark both sides of the depth of the fabric you want to pleat with a pin then fold one pin over to the other and pin into place.
4. Repeat this across your fabric as many times as you want pleats. Remember that all the pleats should lie in the same direction and be the same depth.
5. You can now tack your pleats across the top edge then stitch the pleated fabric to your main fabric **(fig 4)**.

BOX PLEATS

Box Pleats are made by having two pleats facing away from each other. These are ideal for putting at the corners of seat covers or bed valances to allow enough fabric to go round the corners neatly. Inverted box pleats are more commonly used than Box Pleats, but the only difference is that with Inverted Box Pleats the pleat is on the outside and with box pleats the pleat is on the inside.

How to make an Inverted Box Pleat:

1. Calculate how deep you want your pleats to be and allow four times this depth for each corner or pleat.
2. As with the knife pleats, hem the lower edge of your fabric before you pleat the top edge. You now need to mark you fabric before you pleat. Each pleat has two outer fold lines, two inner fold lines and a placement line. Mark these lines in pencil onto the wrong side of your fabric. Now tack along these lines, using red thread for the fold lines and blue thread for the placement lines to help distinguish between them.
3. Fold the fabric right sides together along the placement line, matching inner fold lines and outer fold lines **(fig 5)**.
4. Tack the outer fold lines together then press the pleat flat so the tacked outer fold lines match up with the placement line and the inner fold lines become the outer edges of the pleat. Tack the pleat down across the top before you machine stitch in place to complete **(fig 6)**.

How to make a Box Pleat:

These are made in exactly the same ways as the Inverted Box Pleat but in step 3, fold the fabric wrong sides together instead.

PIN TUCKS

Pin tucks are parallel folds of fabric, which can either be used to provide fullness in a garment or as a decorative finish to a cushion cover or other soft furnishing items.

1. Pin tucks only have a few millimetres of fabric in them so you will need to allow a little extra fabric to the finished piece to allow for this. Mark the centre of all your tucks on the wrong side of the fabric in pencil, making sure they are parallel.
2. To make one tuck, tack along the marked lines so you can see the tuck centre line form the front. Now fold the fabric wrong sides together with the tacking stitches on the fold. Tack the fabric about 3mm (⅛in) away from the fold and press to hold it in place.
3. Tack the fabric about 3mm (⅛in) away from the fold and press to hold it in place. Stitch the fabric together on the fold to make your tiny pin tuck. Repeat for the rest of the tucks marked on your fabric **(fig 7)**.

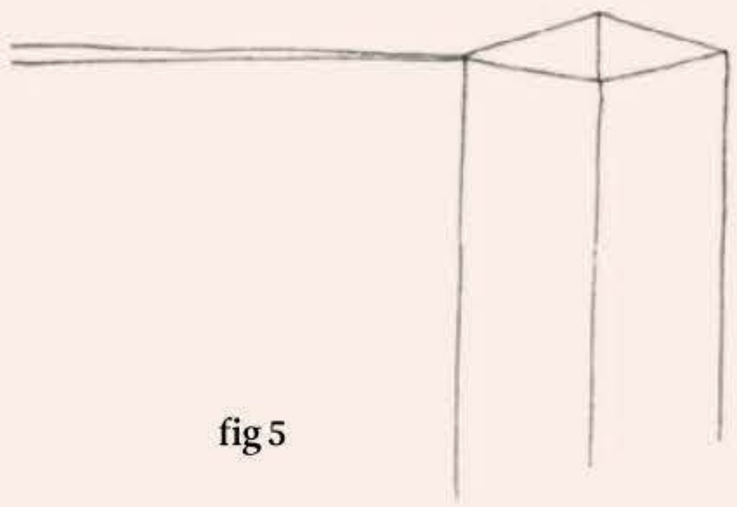


fig 5

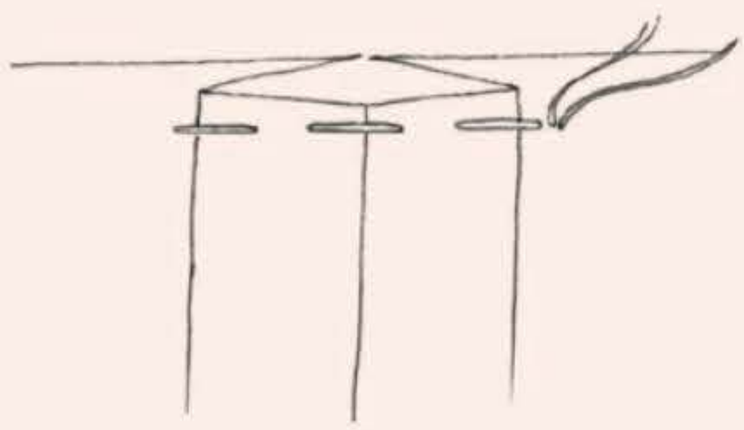


fig 6

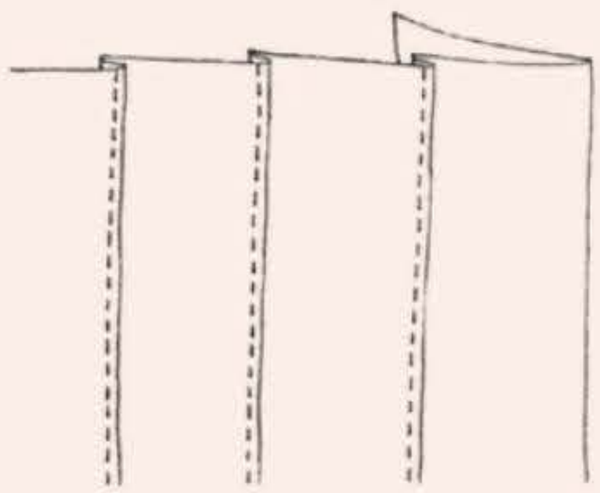


fig 7

TOP TIPS

For a quicker frill, use a length of ribbon instead of fabric. Stitch gathering stitches along it in the same way as the single frill, adjust the gathers and sew it to your main fabric. As both edges are already finished, this frill can easily be inserted into a seam on a cushion cover or sewn on top of an item for a pretty effect.

Vintage Frill Cushion

Whip up these pretty frilled cushions to give your home the handmade vintage look.

SOMETIMES ALL THAT'S needed to turn a plain cushion into something special is a single stand-out feature – so why not try this simple frilled cushion for a quick project that's sure to impress?

These homely cushions give a rustic look that's in keeping with current vintage trends. The fabric used here is simple but smart and also practical as it washes well – always an important consideration! The subtle reds and blues co-ordinate perfectly, and the frill adds an elegant look.

Here, we've made a feature of the tiny dot print and dark edge on the frill fabric. The self-cover buttons use the same fabric and add a decorative finishing touch, but you can use any buttons you wish.

YOU WILL NEED

- Roller towelling or linen, 40.5 x 127cm (16 x 50in)
- Print fabric for frill, buttonhole rectangles and buttons, 23cm (¼yd)
- Lining fabric, 11.5 x 40.5cm (4½in x 16in) (can be the same print as frill)
- Ball of perle No. 8 thread
- Five self-cover buttons
- Feather cushion pad 51cm (20in) square (will be folded)

FINISHED SIZE

38 x 51cm (15 x 20in)

For stockist details, see page 160

PREPARING FABRICS

1 Cut one piece from roller towelling or linen 40.5 x 120.5cm (16 x 47½in).
Cut one piece from lining fabric 11.5 x 40.5cm (4½ x 16in).
Cut one piece from print fabric for the frill 6.5 x 106.5cm (2½in x 42in).

MAKING UP

2 Take the cut piece of roller towelling and mark it as follows (**fig 1**).
Measure along from the left-hand side 34.5cm (13½in) and put in a pin. Measure along 20in and put in another pin – this will be the back shape. This will leave 35.5cm (14in) of fabric remaining. Mark this section with pins at 23cm (9in), 10cm (4in) and 2.5cm (1in). Press light creases at all the points marked with pins and then remove pins.

3 On the right-hand side turn the 2.5cm (1in) under and press to crease. On the left-hand side of the fabric, fold over the 34.5cm (13½in) piece on the first crease (**fig 2**).

4 To make the frill, take the long piece of frill fabric and iron a 0.6cm (¼in) hem twice on the right-hand side and sew under with matching thread (**fig 3a**).

To create the gathers, take a ball of perle No. 8 thread, hold one end down 0.6cm (¼in) in from the left-hand side edge of the fabric. Now zigzag stitch over the thread with your machine from A to B, being careful not to catch the thread (**fig 3b**). This is a much easier way to gather a piece of fabric than the usual two parallel rows of stitching, which can break just at the crucial moment. ▶

> "THESE HOMELY CUSHIONS GIVE A RUSTIC, COUNTRY FARM LOOK THAT'S PERFECTLY IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT VINTAGE TRENDS"

fig 1

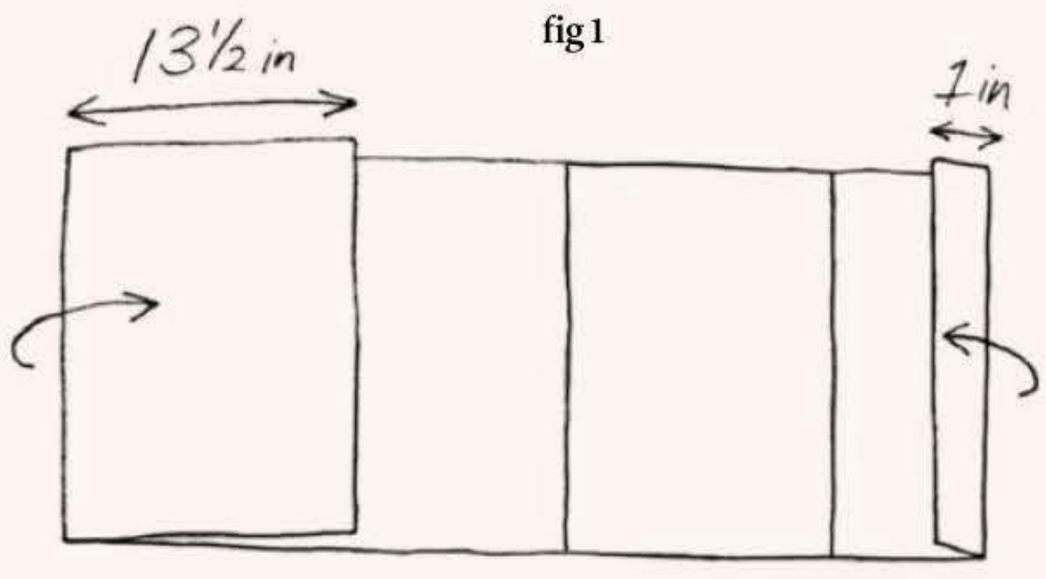


fig 2

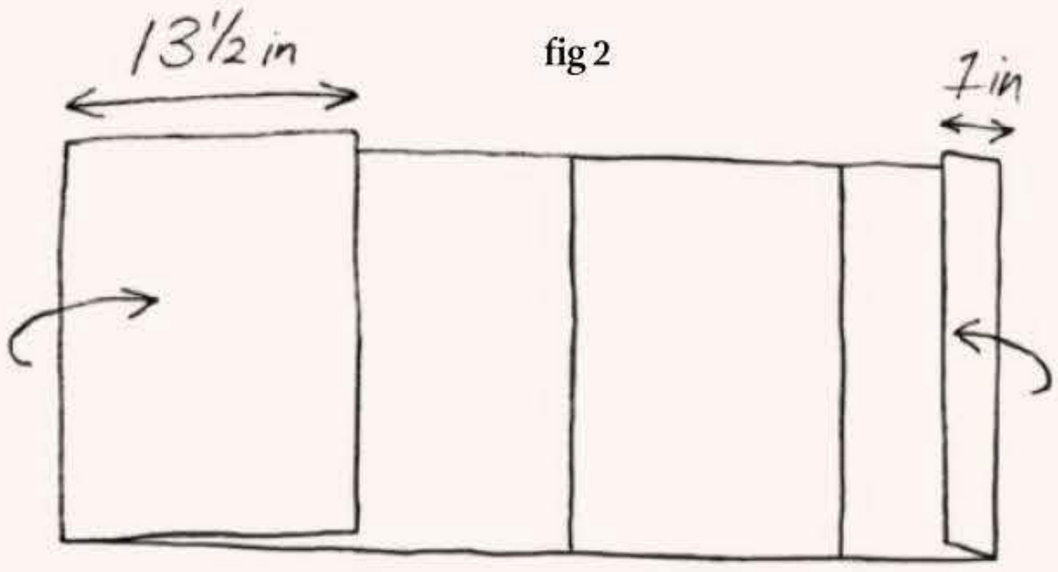


fig 3a

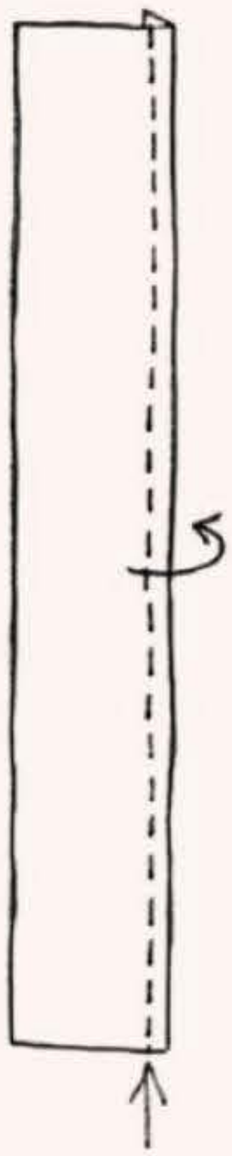
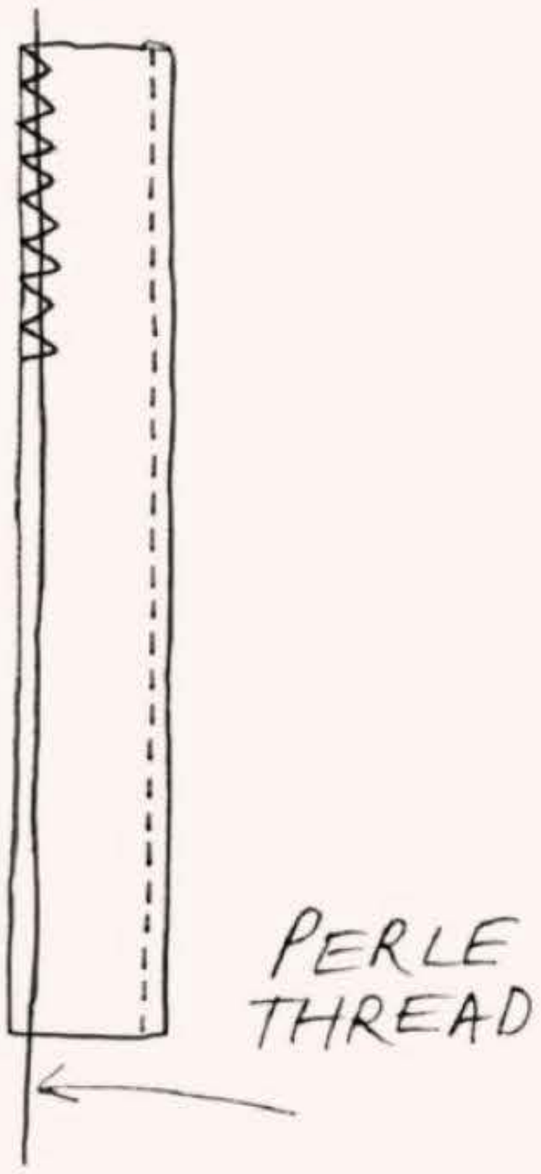


fig 3b



5 Pull on the perle thread to gather the frill so that it fits the left-hand side of the cushion front fabric. Lay the frill down right sides together with the cushion fabric and with the pleats pointing to the left (**fig 4**), and then machine tack (baste) into position.

6 Take the 11.5 x 40.5cm (4½ x 16in) piece of lining fabric and neaten one edge by turning a 0.6cm (¼in) hem twice on the right-hand side. Lay this lining fabric piece on top of the frill, raw edges matching and sew together with a slightly generous 0.6cm (¼in) seam.

Note: Using a wider seam means you do not have to remove the gathering thread, although you could pull it out if you prefer.

7 Turn the lining to the back of the cushion piece and finger press in place; this will encase the frill neatly.

8 Lay the back of the cushion cover on a table and fold in each side (**fig 5**). Mark the five buttonhole positions on the left-hand side and the five button positions on the right-hand side.

9 Prepare the buttonholes – we used bound buttonholes made with rectangles of the print fabric for a really polished look. Set the sewing machine for 1¼in long buttonholes or slightly longer than your buttons. Use the bound buttonhole function on your machine if you have it. Sew the buttonholes and cut the slits. Push the rectangle fabric through the holes and neaten with small stitches.

10 Cover the buttons (if using this sort) using the same fabric as the frill.
Note: Turn to page 32 for more information on using self-cover buttons.

11 Button up the cushion cover and put it right sides together. Sew a generous 0.6cm (¼in) seam down each side (**fig 6**).

12 Stitch twice where the frill is enclosed to reinforce that area. Clip the corners, open the buttons, turn through to the right side and press. Take the square cushion pad and roll the top down towards the back and insert into the cover – it should fill the cushion snugly. (You could buy a rectangular cushion if you prefer.)

CUSHIONS & QUILTS

Fill your home with quilted treats using this delightful book by Jo Colwill (David & Charles, £16.99). *Cushions & Quilts* contains 15 beautiful projects inspired by the Cornish countryside where Jo lives and works. Combine patchwork with appliqué and embroidery for results that are sure to make you smile. Buy now from *www.stitchcraftcreate.co.uk* for the special price of £10.99 or call 0844 880 5851 to place your order.

fig 4

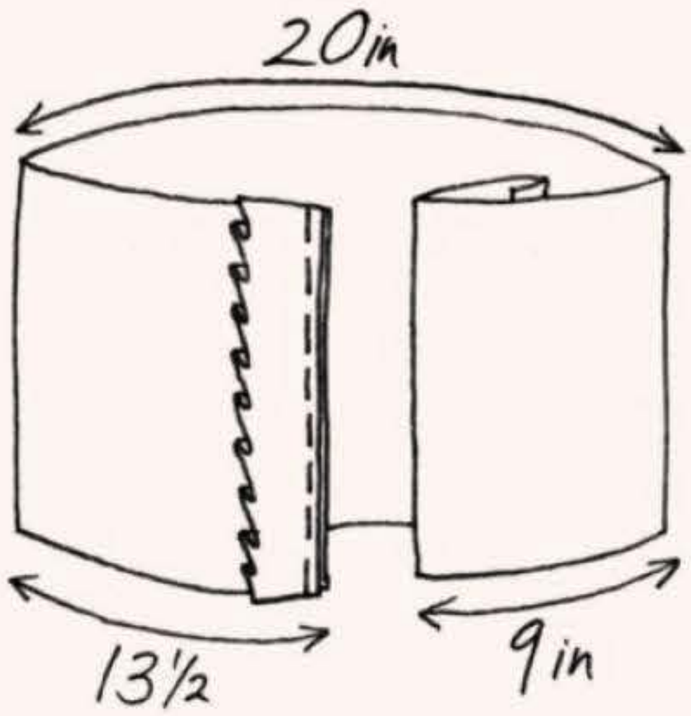


fig 5

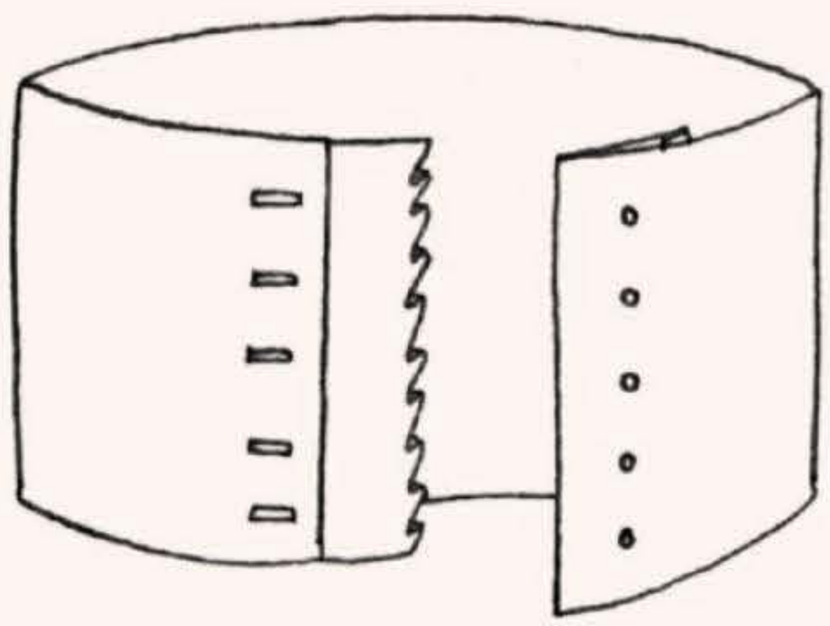
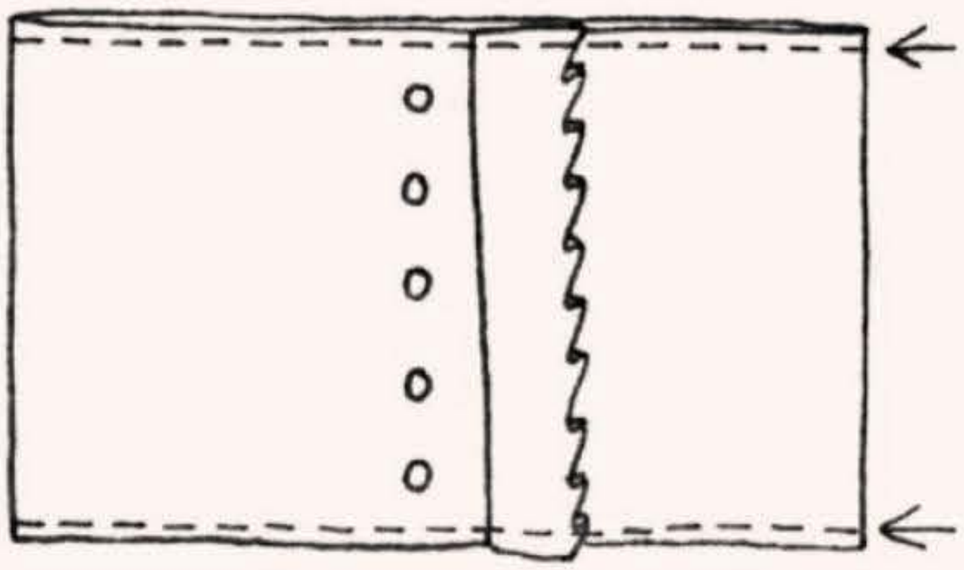


fig 6



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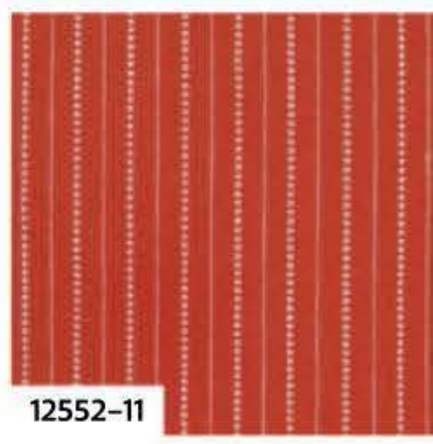

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Expert GUIDE

BUTTONS AND BUTTONHOLES

Give your projects a professional finish with our guide to flawless fastenings

One of the basic sewing skills everyone should know or learn is how to sew on a button. Obviously this is essential simply for sewing buttons back on after they've fallen off shop-bought items, but it's important to sew them on securely. When buttons are sewn on to high street garments they are sewn on by machine. If the beginning or the end of the thread is not secured tightly then the button will easily fall off.

SEWING ON A FLAT BUTTON

Flat buttons usually have two or four holes, and sit flat on the fabric with no shank. There are two ways of sewing these on:

Attaching a flat button to thinner fabric

Use an ordinary sewing thread doubled up. Cut twice the length of thread you need then fold it in half. Thread the two ends through the eye of your needle, leaving you with a loop at the other end. Push the needle down through the fabric exactly in the centre of where you want your button to be, without pulling the thread all the way through. Now push back up, then thread the point of your needle through the loop and pull. Your thread is tightly secured to the fabric. Work a few small stitches on top of each other where the loop lies and it will be even more secure.

Pass your needle up through one hole of the button and down through the other, into the fabric and repeat **(fig 1)**.

If your button has two holes repeat this about six times until your button feels nice and secure. If your button has four holes then there are different ways to sew it on depending on the pattern you want on the top of the button.

When you have finished, remember to work a few small stitches on top of each other on the back of the fabric to secure the end, then snip the remaining thread.

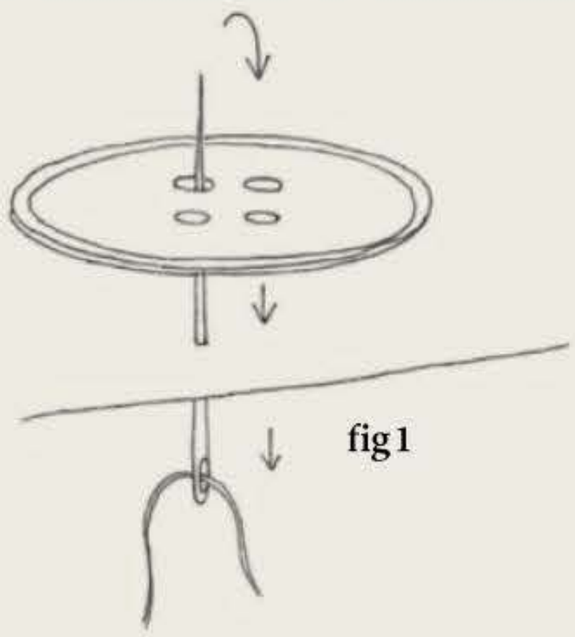

fig 1

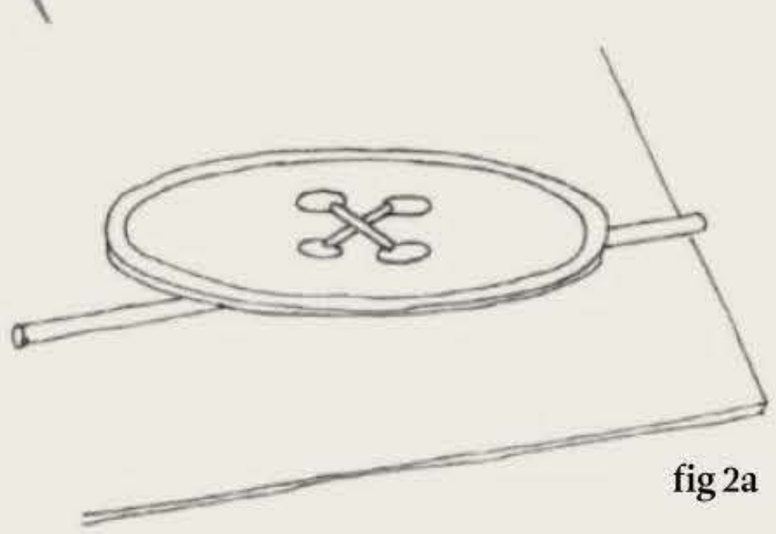

fig 2a

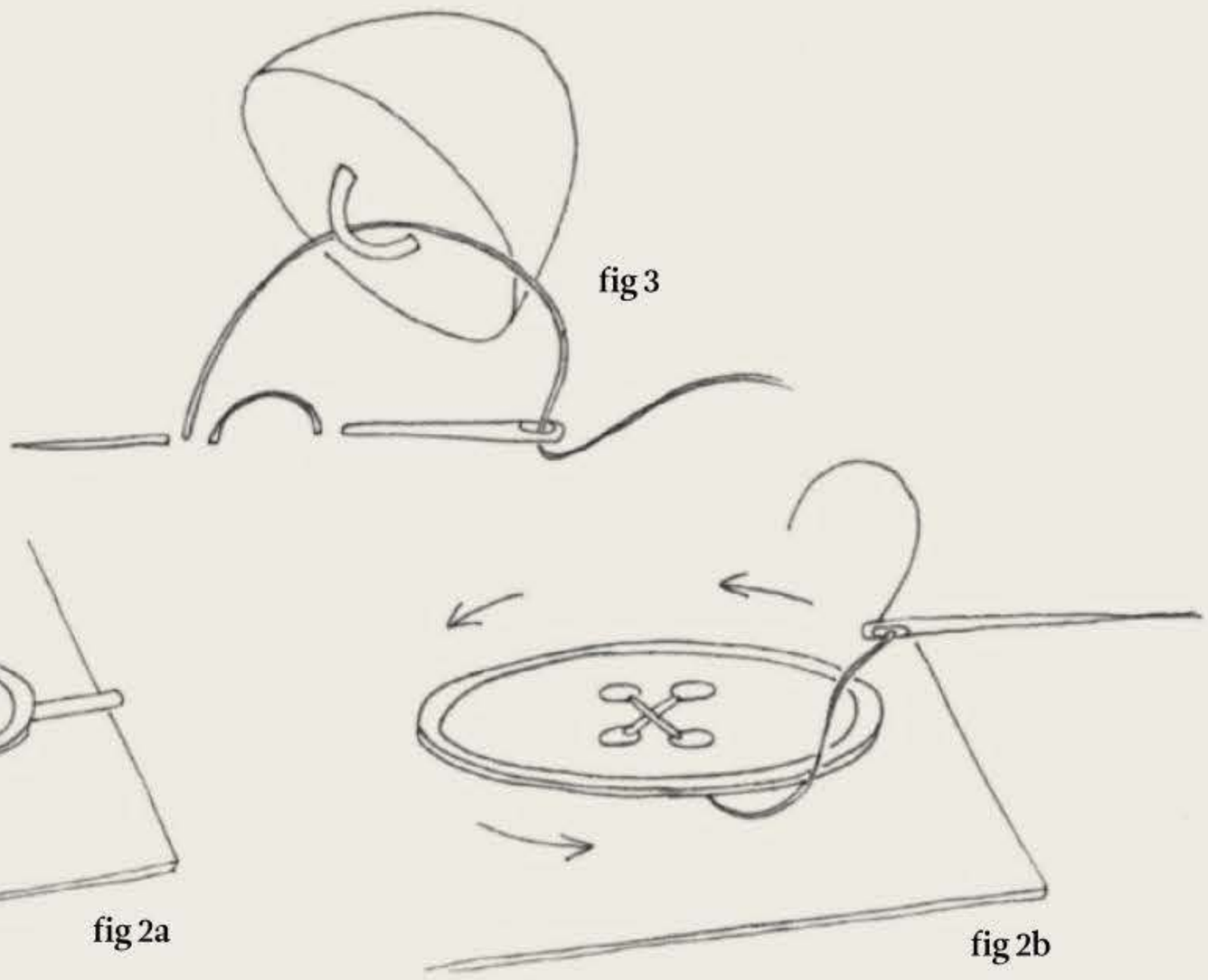

fig 3

fig 2b

Attaching a flat button to thicker fabric
If the buttonhole that the button is going to go through is on quite thick fabric, then you will need to create a shank for the button. This makes sure that it sits slightly away from the fabric it is attached to, giving it a little movement and allowing it to be pushed through the buttonhole, while not rubbing the fabric too much. This is important with larger flat buttons too.

Sew the button on as before, but this time slide a needle or cocktail stick underneath the thread, as shown, so the button is sewn on loosely (**fig 2a**).

When you're done, wrap your thread three or four times around the loose thread underneath the button, take the needle down through the fabric, then fasten off (**fig 2b**).

ATTACHING A SHANK BUTTON

A shank button has a protruding shank at the back of the button which keeps the button away from the fabric – this way the layer of fabric sits flat when the button is pushed through the buttonhole.

Attach your thread to the fabric in the centre of where the button is to be placed, in the same way as with a flat button. Stitch through the shank and into the fabric six or seven times until it feels nice and secure, then finish off the thread securely on the wrong side of the fabric (**fig 3**).

MAKING BUTTONHOLES

You can make a buttonhole either by hand or machine, depending on the finished effect you want. To work out the length of the buttonhole, take the button diameter, and add the button height plus 3mm (⅛in). Decide where you want your finished button to lie, then carefully draw the buttonhole line onto your fabric.

HAND-STITCHED BUTTONHOLES

Cut along your drawn buttonhole line using small sharp scissors.

Attach your thread securely on the back of your fabric at one end of the cut line. Work Buttonhole Stitch all along one side making sure the looped end of the stitch is on the raw edge of the fabric (**figs 4a and 4b**).

At the ends work a semi-circle of Buttonhole stitch then continue down the other side (**fig 4c**).

When you reach the end work a bar of short stitches all lying close together to strengthen the end then fasten off your thread (**fig 4d**).

TOP TIP

Buttonhole stitch is worked in exactly the same way as Blanket Stitch. The only difference is that you work the stitches close together and a little shorter. Turn to p156 to find out how.

MACHINE-STITCHED BUTTONHOLES

If your machine has a buttonhole foot and setting then you can easily make buttonholes by machine. Your machine handbook will explain exactly how to do this as settings do differ slightly from one machine to another.

Once you have stitched your buttonhole, use a seam ripper or a pair of very sharp scissors to cut the fabric inside the buttonhole. Be careful not to cut through any of your stitches.

Always practise making buttonholes a few times on a spare scrap of fabric first, to make sure they are neat and that the button fits snugly through.

SELF-COVERED BUTTONS

Self-covered buttons are a great way to co-ordinate your buttons with a project, as you can use left-over scraps of fabric from your sewing. Self-cover buttons can be bought in either plastic or metal, and come in a range of diameters from 11mm to 45mm (½–1¾in). These buttons are easy to cover without the need for any tools, just a small scrap of fabric.

First cut the fabric into a circle with a diameter 1.5cm (½in) bigger than the button diameter.

Sew a gathering thread all around the edge of the fabric making sure it is securely fastened off at the beginning.

Place the top part of the self-cover button in the centre of the back of the fabric then pull the gathering thread up tightly round the button and work a few stitches over each other to secure.

Finally, press the back of the button over the gathered fabric to complete.

Many of these buttons can be bought with a tool that will help you do this – this can save a lot of time as you don't need to use a gathering thread, but you will get the same finish with or without the tool.

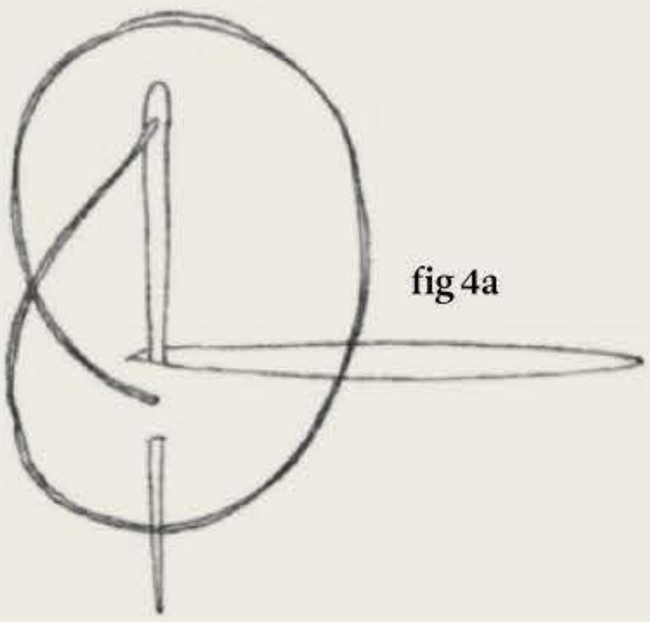

fig 4a

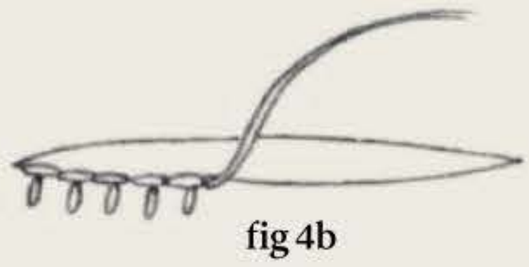

fig 4b

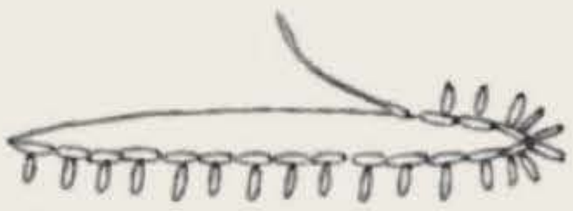

fig 4c

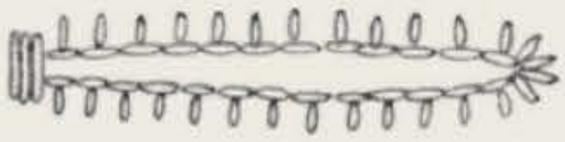

fig 4d

Find self cover buttons at Blooming Felt *www.blooming felt.co.uk*

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Macaron Coin Purse

These adorable mini purses, created from self-cover buttons, really do look good enough to eat!

YOU WILL NEED

- Two self-cover buttons, diameter 4cm (1½in)
- Outer fabric 14 x 7.5cm (5½ x 3in)
- Lining fabric 14 x 7.5cm (5½ x 3in), plus 4cm (1½in) square (for zip binding)
- Batting 10 x 5cm (4 x 2in)
- Zip, 12.5cm (5in) long
- Ribbon, 5cm (2in) long, 1cm (⅜in) wide

FINISHED SIZE

4.5cm (1¾in) diameter, 3cm (1¼in) high

For stockist details, see page 160

IT'S AMAZING WHAT you can create with simple sewing tools, simply by thinking "outside the box". These cute-enough-to-eat purses are a brilliant example of this, made by combining a zip with two self-cover buttons and some pretty scraps of fabric.

You can choose either a nylon or a metal zip for your purse – a nylon zip will be easier to sew and open, but a metal zip looks particularly adorable. Once you've got the hang of it, we think you won't be able to stop sewing these little coin purses – they'd make great presents, and are always useful to stash in your handbag or car with a bit of loose change.

PREPARE THE ZIP

1. Sew to join the zip tape together above the top stops. Fold the ribbon in half and sew it onto the bottom stop with raw ends facing the end of the zip tape (**fig 1**).

2. Fold the zip right side together and sew to join it into a ring (**fig 2**).

3. Neatly trim the zip ends to a 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance from the stops. Fold the 4cm (1½in) square of lining fabric into half then fold each of the raw fabric edges under by 0.5cm (¼in). Encase the seam allowance from joining the ends of the zip into the fold of the fabric and sew in place (**fig 3a**).

4. Fold the piece of lining fabric over the seam you just sewed, onto the zip (covering the end stopper) and sew in place. Turn the zip right side out (**fig 3b**).

5. Make small running stitches along the edges of the zip. Pull to gather. Repeat on the other side. Set aside (**fig 4**).

CREATE THE MACARON

6. Carefully cut away and discard the button shanks from the back plates of the self-cover buttons.

7. Trace circles on to the fabrics with pencil or fabric marker. You will need two 7cm (2¾in) circles from the outer fabric and two from the lining fabric. From the batting cut out two 5cm (2in) circles.

8. Apply a thin layer of glue to the self cover button and attach it to the batting. Set aside to dry.

9. Make small running stitches along the edge of the fabric. Place the cover onto the fabric. Pull the thread and gather the fabric onto the cover snugly. Knot thread.

10. Repeat with the other button cover, and to cover both back plates with lining fabric.

11. Slip stitch the cover to the zip, 1cm (⅜in) from the centre line of the zip (**fig 5**).
Note: The further you sew from the zip, the bigger the coin purse space is.

12. Repeat with the other button cover, on the other side of the zip.

13. Open the zip and place the fabric-covered back plate on to the button cover. Slip stitch neatly into place. Repeat on the other side (**fig 6**).

fig 1

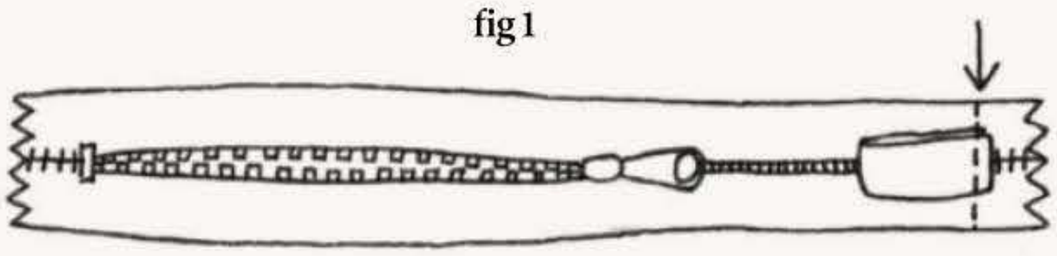
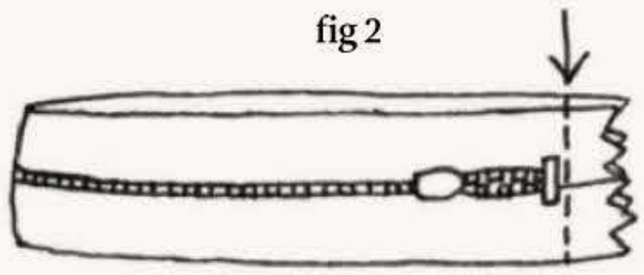


fig 2



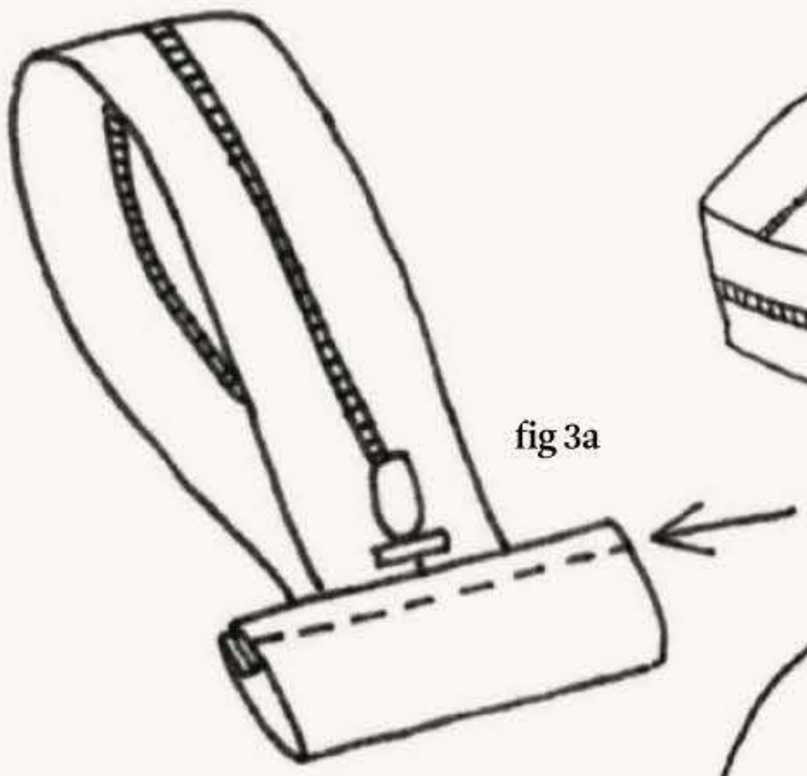


fig 3a

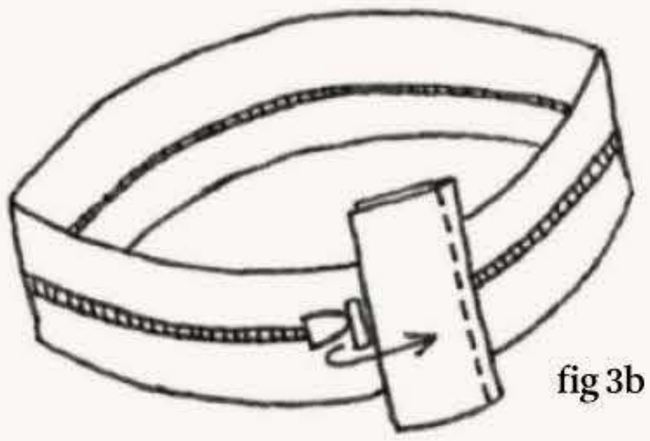


fig 3b

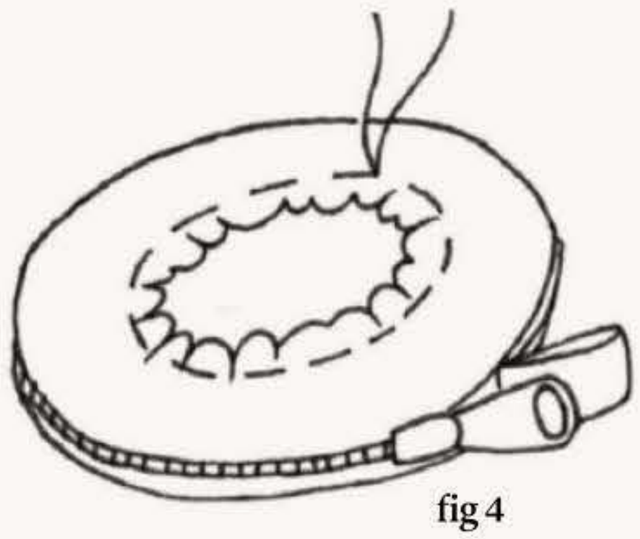


fig 4

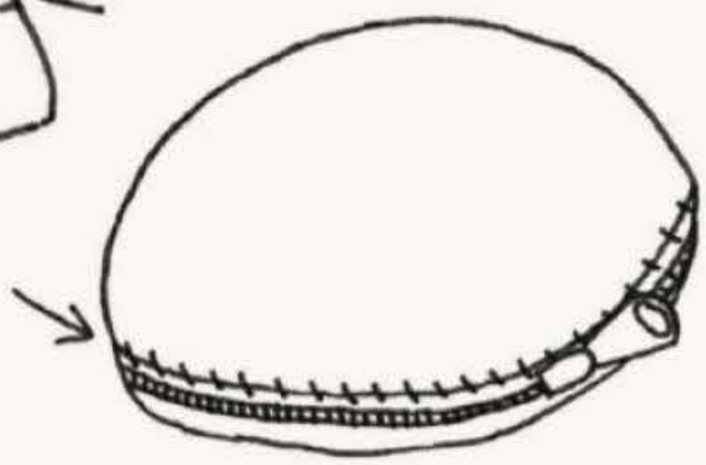


fig 5

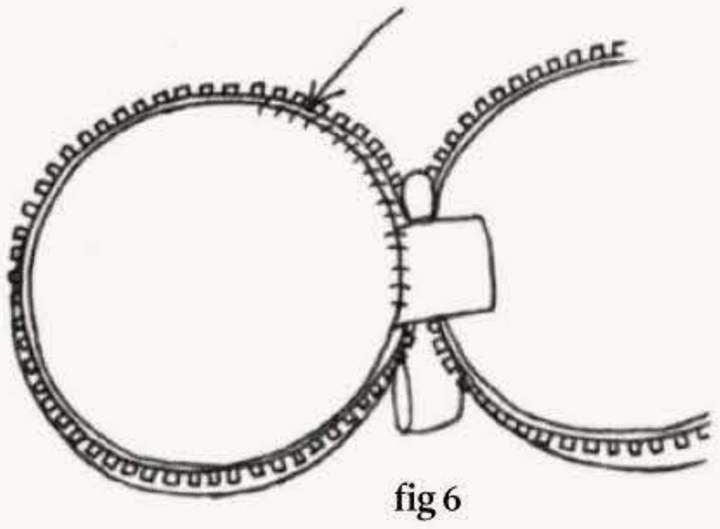


fig 6

A PASSION FOR CRAFTS

Craft Passion is a craft website with hundreds of free patterns and tutorials covering sewing, crochet, knitting, beading, paper crafts and more. The site also offers many tutorials on how to recycle unwanted materials into handmade gems. All patterns and tutorials on Craft Passion come with easy to follow step-by-step photos. *www.craftpassion.com*

Expert GUIDE

ELASTIC

Create gathered effects as well as smocking and stretch by using elastic in your projects.

Elastic is a really useful sewing material both for dressmaking and for household and craft projects. It allows you to give fabric fullness and can be threaded through a hem or stitched directly to the fabric itself. Stitching with elastic in your sewing machine is known as shirring or gathering, and produces a more gathered effect.

MAKING A CASING FOR ELASTIC

If you want to sew a hem or casing for elastic to go through, then you will need to make sure that the elastic can move easily through it or it won't gather the fabric properly.

1. Measure your elastic width then add 6mm (¼in) for ease and twice the thickness of the elastic.
2. Turn the fabric over 1.5cm (½in) then over again to the width you calculated in step 1. Stitch the hem down close to the folded over edge (**fig 1**).

JOINING THE ENDS OF ELASTIC

When you have threaded the elastic through the casing or hem and adjusted it so it is the correct length you can just knot the ends. However for some items you may find this knot looks too bulky so you should overlap the ends and stitch them together either by hand or machine (**fig 2**).

THREADING ELASTIC

The easiest way to thread elastic through a casing is to attach one end to a safety pin and thread this through. You can also buy elastic threaders or bodkins which keep the elastic taut whilst threading it through as well as stopping if from twisting. To stop the elastic coming all the way through the casing, hold it in place at the far end with a safety pin.

ATTACHING ELASTIC TO FABRIC

If you want to stitch elastic straight to your piece of fabric rather than adding a casing you first need to divide the fabric into quarters and mark with a pin.

Now cut your elastic to size, then divide this into quarters and mark with a pin.

Match each pin on the fabric and elastic and pin the two together in these places.

To join the elastic to the fabric use a wide, long zig zag stitch, stretching the elastic out between each of the pin markers as you sew (**fig 3**).

SEWING WITH ELASTIC

Sewing with elastic is called gathering if you only stitch one row, and called shirring if you stitch more than one.

First you will need to mark the line on your fabric where you want the elastic to be sewn. Make sure you use tailor's chalk or an air erasable pen so the line won't show afterwards.

Use ordinary sewing thread for the top thread in your sewing machine, and shirring elastic on the bobbin. You must wind the elastic on to the bobbin by hand to make sure it is the correct tension. You need to pull the elastic slightly so it doesn't lie loosely round the bobbin but don't pull it too much or it will be overstretched. This won't take too long to do as you'll soon get into a rhythm of pulling it to just the right tension so it winds neatly around the bobbin.

Now set your sewing machine to its longest stitch length as this will allow a longer length of elastic for each stitch, giving the fabric more stretch and pull when it's finished.

Stitch along the marked line as you would normally (going backwards at the beginning to secure the thread and elastic).

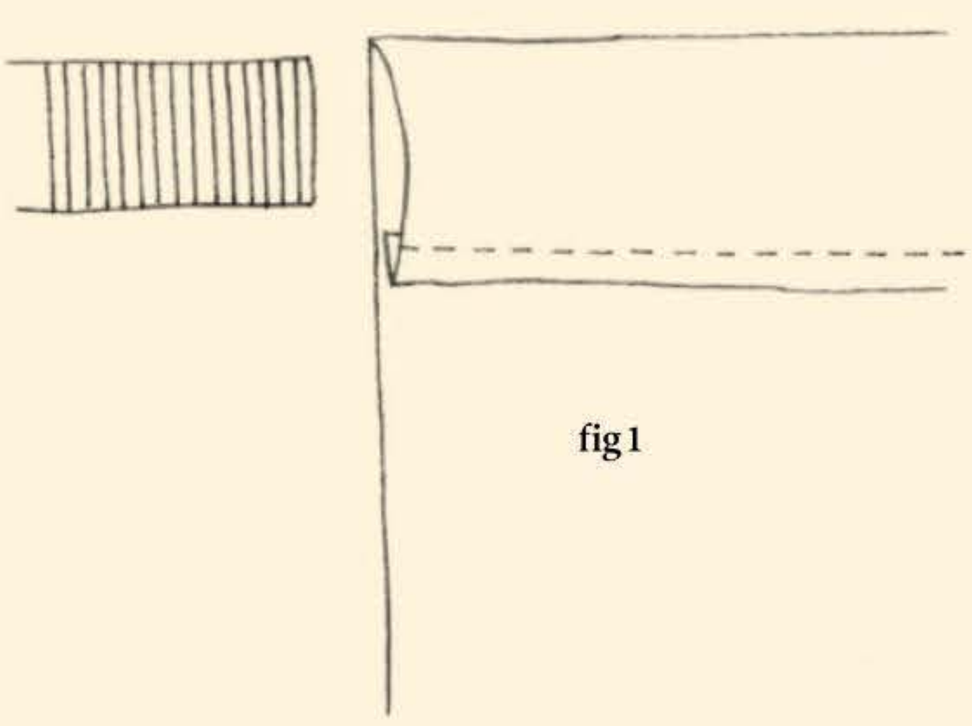


fig 1

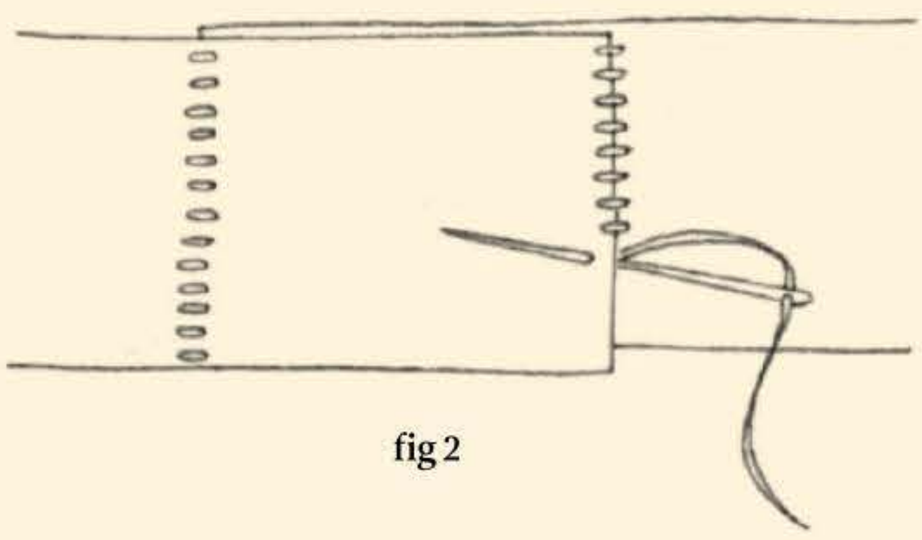


fig 2

Make sure the fabric remains flat as you are stitching – you may need to hold it in place as you stitch. When you come to the end of the line, reverse stitch again to secure the ends of your thread and elastic

If you are stitching more than one row of elastic (shirring) then the fabric will obviously already be gathered after stitching the first row. Make sure you hold the fabric in front of and behind the needle to keep it flat, taking care not to overstretch it (**fig 4**).

You can adjust the space between your rows of shirring depending on the effect you want to create. For a tightly gathered piece of fabric, stitch the rows of elastic 6mm (¼in) apart or for a looser effect, space the rows 1.5cm (½in) apart.

Some computerised sewing machines have a shirring stitch, also called an elastic zig zag stitch. This stitch will set your machine to the correct tension but you may still need to experiment with the stitch length and width a little.

When you have finished stitching all your rows of shirring, the best way to tighten the elastic thread is to press it gently with a steam iron. Place a thin clean cloth on top of your stitched fabric and hold the iron gently over it to allow to steam to flow through.

These pretty cotton bath hats use a channel of elastic to ensure a tight fit.

WHICH NEEDLE TO USE FOR ELASTIC?

The best needle for stitching elastic directly to fabric is a stretch needle. These needles have rounded points that penetrate between the fabric threads rather than pierce them. The point of a stretch needle is slightly less rounded than the point of a ballpoint needle so it works better when stitching on elastic, as ballpoint needles (used for sewing knit fabric) can sometimes skip stitches.

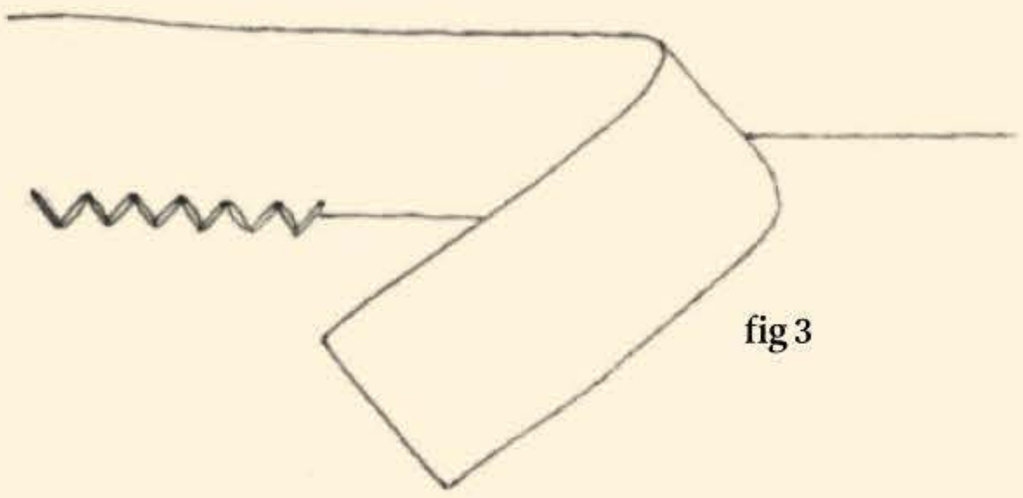


fig 3

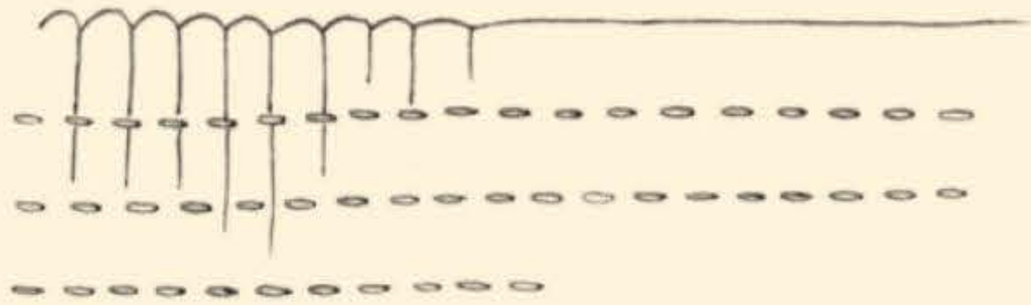


fig 4

Cotton Bath Hat

Sew this pretty elasticised bath hat with water-resistant lining and contrast bound edge, taken from *And Sew To Bed*.

Photography © Emma Mitchell

A PRACTICAL, ELASTICATED shower cap is a bathroom essential – it's just a shame so many hats you can buy in the shops are boring, utilitarian designs. So wouldn't it be so much better to bring a stylish splash of colour to your bathroom by making one of your own?

The outside of this bath hat is a simple cotton print, so you really are free to choose any colour, design or style you choose. Match your bathroom décor or choose your favourite outrageous print – this really is your chance to go wild!

The lining of the hat is made from a lightweight water-resistant fabric, so it will keep your hair dry through any bath or shower, ensuring you'll always be able to go out looking your best.

1 Cut a circle out of paper, 47.5cm (19in) in diameter. Use as a pattern to cut one circle in cotton print and one in water-resistant lining. Place the two circles WS together and pin around the edges to secure. Stitch around the entire circle 2.5cm (1in) from the edge (**fig 1**).

2 Open out the pre-folded binding and fold one end over by 2cm (¾in) to neaten. Place the binding RS down on the lining. Stitch around the hat, using the fold of the binding as a guide for the seam allowance. Halfway round the circle, stop and secure the stitching, making sure to leave a 5cm (2in) gap to allow for threading the elastic. Complete the stitching of the circle, overlapping the raw end of the binding over the folded end by 2cm (¾in), and trim off any excess binding (**fig 2**).

"BRING A STYLISH SPLASH OF COLOUR TO YOUR BATHROOM"

3 Fold the binding over to the outside of the hat and edge stitch along the edge on the RS. Leave a 10cm (4in) gap in the stitching, so that it extends 2.5cm (1in) beyond each side of the 5cm (2in) opening left in step 2.

4 Steam the elastic and cut to 45cm (18in). Attach a safety pin at one end for threading and another at the other end to anchor the elastic to a section of the binding, to avoid losing it inside the channel. Thread the elastic through the channel (**fig 3**).

5 Pull out the ends, making sure the elastic is not twisted, and overlap them by 3cm (1¼in). Zig-zag stitch along the overlapped section to secure the ends together (**fig 4**).

7 Stretch out the shower cap so that the elastic pulls back inside the channel evenly. Arrange the unstitched section of the binding so that it lies flat. On the inside, stitch the original 5cm (2in) gap first. On the outside, edge stitch along the final 10cm (4in) gap to close.

YOU WILL NEED

- 50 x 50cm (20 x 20in) lightweight cotton print
- 50 x 50cm (20 x 20in) lightweight water-resistant lining fabric
- 1.5m (1¾yd) of 2.5cm (1in) wide pre-folded bias binding
- 50cm (20in) of 1cm (⅜in) wide elastic

For stockist details, see page 160

AND SEW TO BED

And Sew to Bed **by Caro London is published by CICO Books at £12.99, paperback. It's packed with 30 beautiful projects for nightwear and accessories, from a delicate nightdress with lace trims to a cute and quirky owl pyjamas case, and everything comes with illustrated step-by-step instructions. Call 01256 302699 quoting GLR 8AT to purchase a copy at the special price of £10.99 including free UK p&p. *www.cicobooks.co.uk*.**

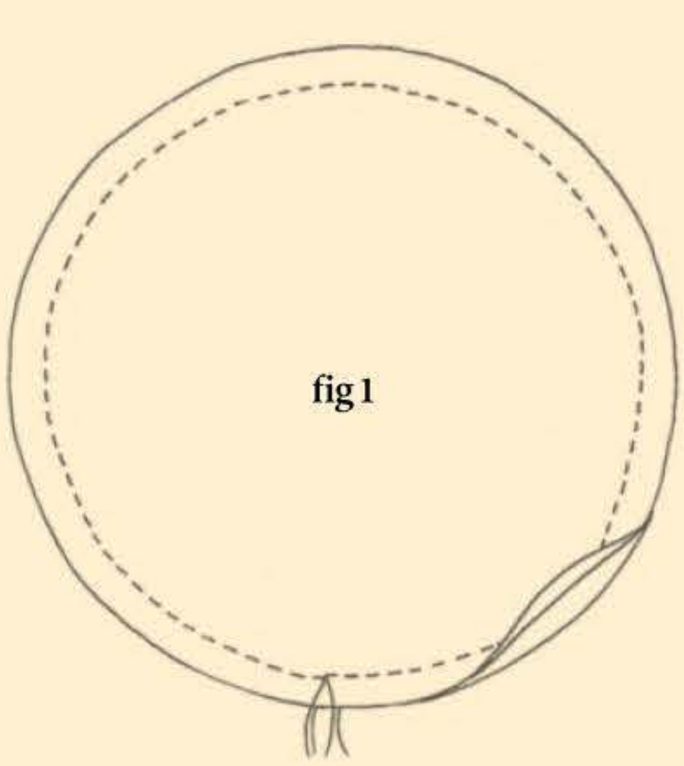
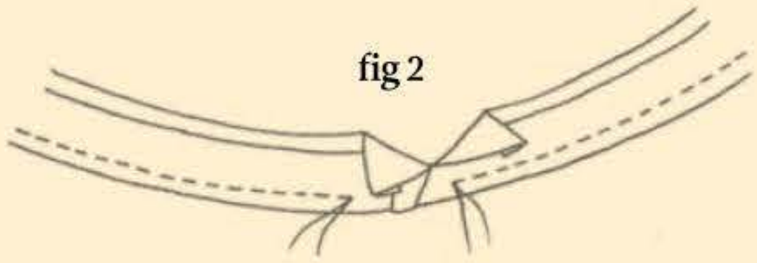


fig 1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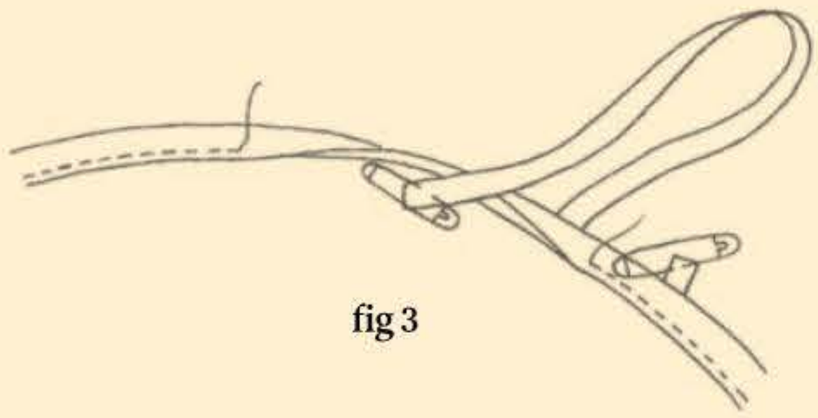


fig 3

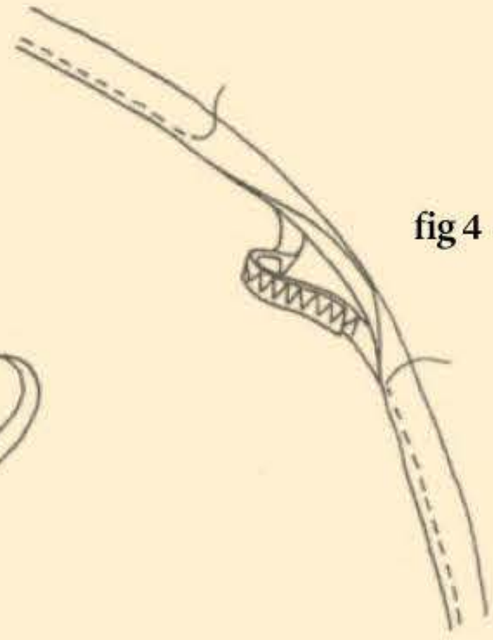


fig 4

INTERFACING

Give your projects some support with our professional guide to choosing and using interfacing.

Interfacing is an additional unseen layer that's placed inside your projects. It's used to strengthen and support the fabric, or prevent it from stretching out of shape. Interfacing is used a lot in dressmaking to stiffen different parts of garments, but is also really useful in home and craft sewing. There is quite a choice of different types though, so read our handy guide before you start.

IRON-ON OR SEW IN INTERFACING?

There are two types of interfacing – iron-on (fusible) and sew-in (non fusible). They are used for different things so you need to make sure you choose the right one for the job when gathering your materials.

Iron-on interfacing is the easiest interfacing to use as it is attached to the wrong side of the fabric, so will stay in place whilst you are working with it. You can use it for most fabrics and finished items.

Sew-in interfacing is best used for:
Really textured fabrics, as the glue used in iron-on interfacing won't stick as well to the surface.

Fabrics like velvet and fur, as pressing on these with an iron will flatten the nap of the fabric and could ruin its appearance.

Heat sensitive fabrics which could melt or distort when ironed, such as vinyls and metallic fabric.

Very open weave fabrics like lace or net, where the glue might come through to the right side.

NON-WOVEN OR WOVEN INTERFACING?

Non-woven interfacing is the most popular interfacing to use as it is made by bonding fibres together rather than weaving, so it has no grain. This makes it particularly economical as you can cut it, stick it or sew it on in any direction, helping you to use up every last bit.

	USE FOR	WHICH FABRIC?
LIGHT-WEIGHT	Small areas of garments like collars, pockets or flaps. Ideal for putting behind lightweight fabrics you want to embroider on to give more body.	Delicate fabrics such as silk, viscose and acetate.
MEDIUM-WEIGHT	Facings for dresses, waistcoats, jackets and coats as well as collars, pockets, flaps etc. Good for adding a little body to cotton bags.	Light to medium weight fabrics such as pure cotton, wool or raw silk, velvet, corduroy and metallic fabrics.
HEAVY-WEIGHT	Coats and jackets – it's also the most common interfacing used in bags to add structure to the sides or bottom.	Wools, tweeds, heavy cotton fabrics.
ULTRA HEAVY-WEIGHT	Fabric bowls and baskets, cap peaks, bag bottoms. Doesn't crease easily so will keep its strength. Makes bags stand up but feels soft.	Thick felt fabrics or canvas.

TOP TIP

You'll generally find that the wool setting on your iron is about right for most fabrics, but always start low and increase the heat rather than the other way round to avoid any messy disasters! You should test the heat is right without melting the interfacing or fabric when you do your test piece.

WOVEN INTERFACING

Woven interfacing has a grain just like woven fabric does, so it's really important to cut the interfacing piece in the same direction as the fabric. It's less economical than woven interfacing but works better with really fine fabrics such as silk as it has more drape.

KNIT INTERFACING

You can buy knit interfacing as well, although this isn't as common so might be harder to get hold of. Knit interfacing has a little stretch in it, so is good for using with jersey fabrics where support is needed but some stretch as well.

WHAT WEIGHT TO CHOOSE?

Always buy an interfacing that feels the same weight as the fabric you will be attaching it to, or just a little bit lighter. Remember that iron-on interfacing will become stiffer once pressed as the glue holding it to your fabric dries. If you're unsure, ask for advice when you buy your interfacing or just feel the thickness of the different types available and choose one that feels about the same as the fabric you are using.

HOW TO USE IRON-ON

Whenever you use iron-on interfacing, always test a small piece on a scrap of fabric first to make sure it's the right weight and doesn't add more stiffness than you need.

BONDING WEB

This is an interfacing that works like double-sided tape and is perfect for hand or machine appliqué.

It has a paper backing which you draw the shape you want to appliqué on (in reverse), but don't cut out straight away.

Iron the bonding web on to your fabric, with the paper side up. Once it is firmly stuck to the fabric, cut out the shape round the drawn lines and peel off the paper backing.

Turn the shape over and firmly press it on to the fabric you want to appliqué the shape to. Now stitch it on by hand or machine for additional decoration and a permanent fix.

Firm projects such as baskets need interfacing for strength and support.

You don't want to only discover this after glueing it onto all your fabric pieces!

Look at the interfacing and you will see it has a shiny side and a matt side. The shiny side has the glue on it.

Place your main fabric wrong side up on your ironing board then place the interfacing glue side down on top of it. If you're using woven interfacing, make sure you match the grain of the fabric and of the interfacing so they go in the same direction.

Place a damp cloth (like a tea towel) over the fabric and interfacing then press your iron on top of it. Hold the iron in place for 10 to 15 seconds then move it. Don't glide the iron as this could shift or scrunch up the interfacing, but lift and press instead.

You don't need to use the steam setting of your iron as the damp cloth will provide the steam as well as protecting the fabric and interfacing. Every now and then, lift your cloth and check to see if the interfacing is firmly glued in place. If not, keep pressing until it is.

HOW TO USE SEW-IN

Place the interfacing on the wrong side of your fabric then tack together all round the edge. You can either cut the interfacing and fabric to shape then tack them together or tack the interfacing to the fabric then cut round it afterwards, depending on how small or fiddly the shape is.

COLOURED INTERFACING

Interfacing comes in two colours – either light (white) or dark (charcoal). Choose the colour to match your fabric so it won't show through.

Fabric Baskets

There's no excuse for a disorganised stash with Emma Castle's pretty patchwork baskets.

A HOME IS so much neater if everything has a place – even if at times not everything is in its place! These baskets, in three sizes, will quickly become essentials. They're ideal for holding all your scraps of fabric neat and tidy, but really they can be used just about anywhere in the home, storing any bits and pieces that otherwise threaten to clutter up the room.

This pattern is incredibly versatile as well. Here, the baskets are made in a selection of printed and plain cottons, but why not try them in thicker fabrics such as felt, or even linen, corduroy or wool? You can co-ordinate with different colour schemes or choose patterned fabrics to reflect the interests of family members.

The baskets were designed by Emma Castle, and you can visit Emma's website *www.bagladee.com* to view her shop, packed with fab bags and cute homewares made in her Nottingham studio.

CUTTING OUT

From the plain fabric cut out the following:
For the small box: two pieces, each 11 x 21cm (4¼ x 8¼in).
For the medium box: two pieces, each 13 x 27cm (5 x 10½in).
For the large box: two pieces, each 16 x 33cm (6¼ x 13in).

From the fusible interfacing cut out the following:
For the small box: two pieces, each 11 x 21cm (4¼ x 8¼in).
For the medium box: two pieces, each 13cm x 27cm (5 x 10½in).
For the large box: two pieces, each 16cm x 33cm (6¼ x 13in).

From the lining fabric cut out the following:
For the small box: two pieces, each 13 x 21cm (5 x 8¼in).
For the medium box: two pieces, each 18 x 27cm (7 x 10½in).
For the large box: two pieces, each 23 x 33cm (9 x 13in).

From the sew-in interfacing cut out the following:
For the small box: four pieces, each 13 x 21cm (5 x 8¼in).
For the medium box: four pieces, each 18 x 27cm (7 x 10½in).
For the large box: four pieces, each 23 x 33cm (9 x 13in).

MAKING THE PATCHWORK PANELS

1 For each box cut the printed fabric into strips – the strips can be any width or a mixture of widths. Allow 1cm (⅜in) on each piece of fabric for the seam allowance.

For the small box, cut all strips 5cm (2in) high and enough strips to make two lengths of 22cm (8¾in) once sewn together (**fig 1**).
For the medium box, cut all strips 8cm (3¼in) high to make two lengths of 28cm (11in) once sewn together.
For the large box, cut all strips 10cm (4in) high, to make a two lengths of 34cm (13½in) once the pieces are all sewn together.

2 Cut out a piece of fusible interfacing to match each of the printed fabric strips for your patchwork. Press the interfacing pieces onto the wrong side of their corresponding fabric strips.

3 Sew the printed fabric pieces into a row, using a 1cm (⅜in) seam allowance and press the seams open.
Square up to the following sizes:
For the small box: 4cm x 21cm (1½ x 8¼in).
For the medium box: 7cm x 27cm (2¾ x 10⅝in).
For the large box: 9cm x 33cm (3½ x 13in).

YOU WILL NEED

- Printed fabric 0.5m (19¾in)
- Plain/solid fabric 0.5m (19¾in)
- Lining fabric 0.5m (19¾in)
- Fusible interfacing 0.5m (19¾in)
- Sew-in interfacing 1m (39½in)
- Disappearing fabric marker
- Ribbon to match your fabric
- One button for each box

Note: The fabrics pictured here came from *www.eternalmaker.com* – Ruby Star Rising in Ephemera Pink by Melody Miller, and Solid Linen in Aqua and Yellow by Kiyohara.

FINISHED SIZE

- **Small:** 7.5cm (3in) high x 11cm (4¼in) wide x 8cm (3¼in) deep
- **Medium:** 11cm (4¼in) high x 15cm (6in) wide x 10cm (4in) deep
- **Large:** 15cm (6in) high x 18.5cm (7¼in) wide x 12.5cm (5in) deep

For stockist details, see page 160

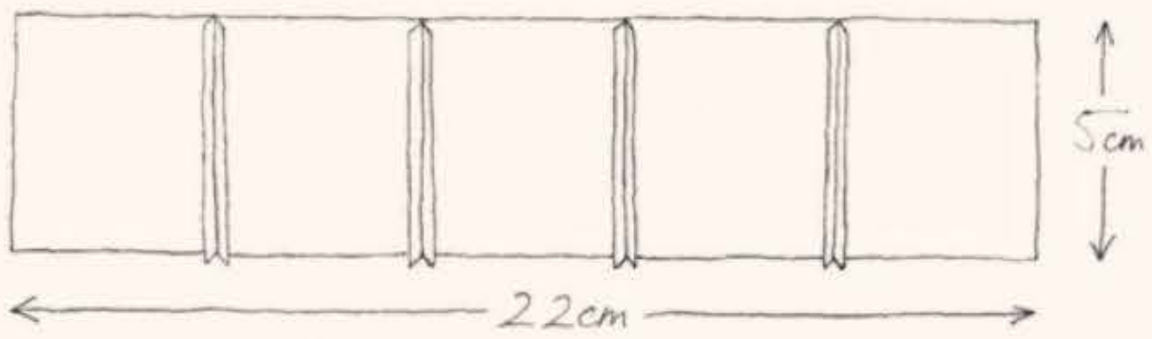


fig 1

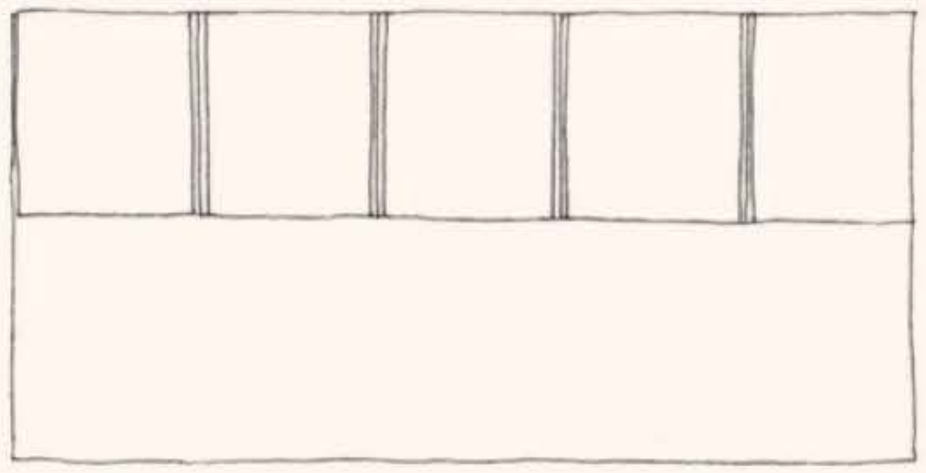


fig 2

CREATING THE BOX SIDES

4 Press the remaining pieces of fusible interfacing onto the wrong side of the corresponding plain fabric pieces.

5 Place the patchwork panels right sides together with the plain fabric pieces and pin in place. Sew together with a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance then press the seams open (**fig 2**).

6 Turn the joined patchwork and plain panels right side up and pin ribbon over the join. Trim to size and sew into place. To make a bow, cut a 12cm (4¾in) length of ribbon and fold both ends into the middle. Stitch the ends in place then sew on top of the length of ribbon. Sew a button in the centre (**fig 3**).

7 Take the completed box pieces, place them right sides together and sandwich two pieces of sew-in interfacing on either side, to make the box rigid (**fig 4**). Sew a 1cm (3/8in) seam all the way round, leaving the top seam open.

8 Now slot your hand in the open seam between the two layers and flatten the side seams and the bottom seam, pinching them flat to create a point with the corner of your box (**fig 5**).

9 Check that your bottom and side seam match and flow along the bottom and up the side as evenly as you can.

10 Measure from the point down and mark with a disappearing fabric marker as follows:
For the small box: 4cm (1½in).
For the medium box: 5cm (2in).
For the large box: 6cm (2¼in).

11 Using a ruler, draw a horizontal line across your seam where you made a mark. Run one line of stitching along the marker line. Run another line of stitching just over the seam – this will prevent the seam opening up once you have trimmed off the excess. Trim the corner about 1cm (3/8in) away from the sewing line. This makes the corner sit neater once turned through the correct way.

12 Repeat this process again on the other corner. Press your seams open and turn your box out the right way.

13 Take your lining pieces, pin together and starting from the top left corner, sew down one side and along the bottom, stopping 5cm (2in) from the edge. Do the same, starting at the opposite top corner, so that you leave a gap in the seam in the middle of the bottom edge. This will allow you to turn the box the right way out through the lining.

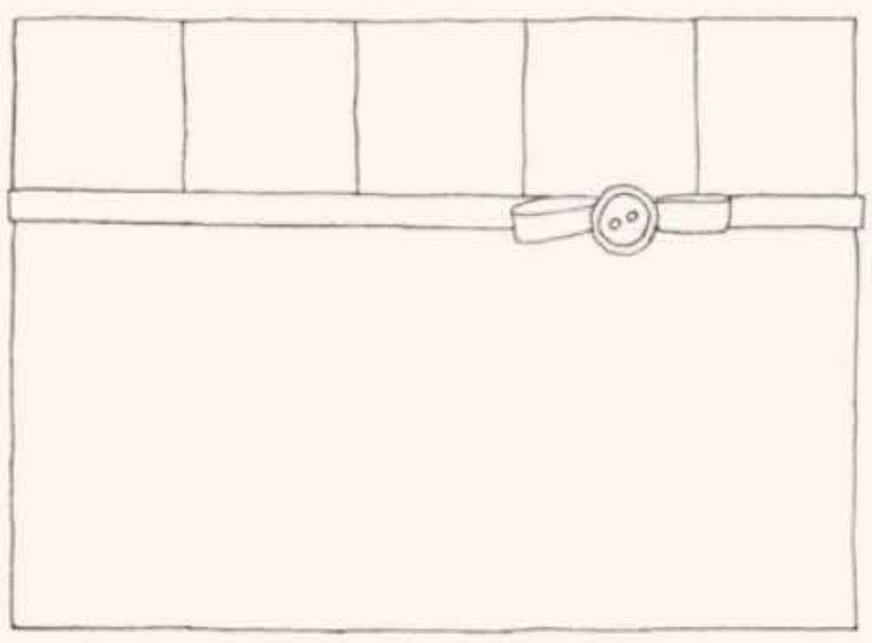
14 Create box corners for the lining in the same way as you did for the outer box. Press the seams open.

15 Slot the lining over the outer box, matching up seams and open edges.

16 Pin and sew a 1cm (3/8in) seam around the top, sewing lining to outer box. Turn box out through the lining opening. Push out corners. Sew up gap in lining. Push lining inside box. Roll top edge with your fingers and iron. Topstitch 1cm (3/8in) from the top of the box. Repeat for other boxes.

TOP TIP

Do take extra care at the final stages to ensure your box sits squarely and neatly for a smooth, professional finish.



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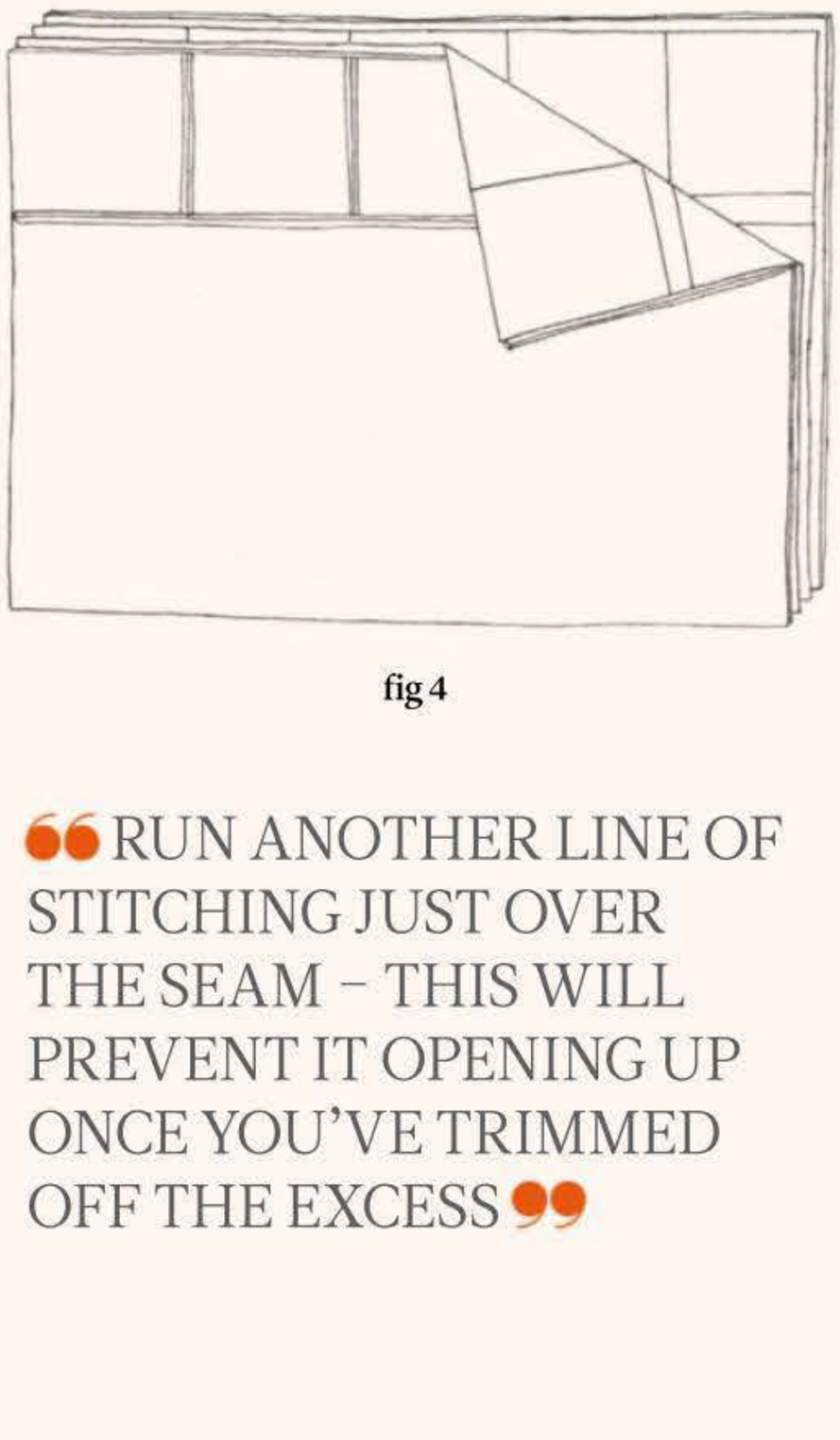


fig 4

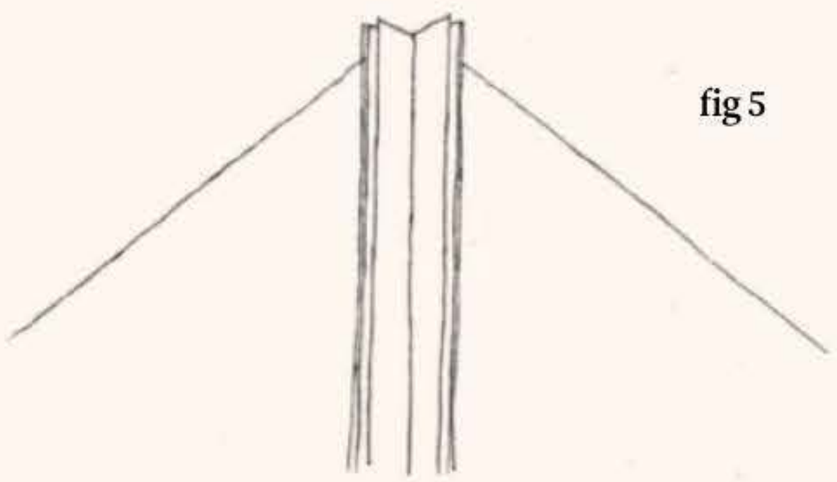


fig 5

> RUN ANOTHER LINE OF STITCHING JUST OVER THE SEAM – THIS WILL PREVENT IT OPENING UP ONCE YOU'VE TRIMMED OFF THE EXCESS

Love Patchwork & Quilting

These pretty boxes were designed by Emma Castle, a designer/fabricator with a love of handmade and all things creative (*www.bagladee.com*).
This pattern was first featured in *Love Patchwork & Quilting* magazine, issue 2.

INSERTING ZIPS

Sewing in zips can be a tricky skill to master, but the trick is to take your time and tack everything in place before you stitch.

Zips are perfect for closing cushion covers and seat covers. They also are ideal for adding a secure closure to fabric bags, from a lightweight nylon zip on small make-up bags to a sturdy metal zip in a shoulder bag.

INSERT A ZIP INTO A CUSHION COVER

The following instructions show you how to insert a zip into the centre of the back of a cushion cover. This is the easiest method to use but can be easily adapted to place a zip in any seam.

CUTTING OUT YOUR FABRIC

1. Using a 36 x 36cm (14 x 14in) cushion cover (finished size) as an example and with a 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance, you will need the following fabric pieces:

Front: 39 x 39cm (15 x 15in)

Back: Two pieces each measuring 21 x 39cm (8 x 15in).

2. The finished size of the zip from slider to the ends of the teeth needs to be 33cm (13in). If you buy a 36cm (14in) zip, though, you'll have more flexibility, as you can sew across the teeth at the end to make it the exact measurement you need.

SEWING THE SEAM

1. Use a 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance throughout.

2. Take the two back pieces and place them right sides together with the long edges at the top. Mark with a pin 2.5cm (1in) in from each side edge.

3. Sew the two back pieces together up to the pin marks so you have two 2.5cm (1in) seams at either side (**fig 1**).

4. Change the stitch length setting on your sewing machine so it is at its longest and sew the two back pieces together between the side seams you worked before. Take care not to stitch into these side seams, and don't finish off the ends of this new seam – the threads need to be loose so that you can easily undo the stitches later.

PINNING THE ZIP IN PLACE

1. Open out the fabric pieces and press the seam open with the wrong side up.

2. Place your zip wrong side up over the seam and place the top of the slider just below the 2.5cm (1in) side seam. Pin the zip to the fabric making sure the centre of the zip runs down the centre of the seam.

ZIP SIZING

Zip length is measured between the top and bottom teeth closures. This doesn't include the tape at either end, so what you buy will always be a bit longer.
Zip size is a number that describes the zip's strength – the larger the number, the stronger the zip. This is usually stamped on the underside of the slider.

fig 1

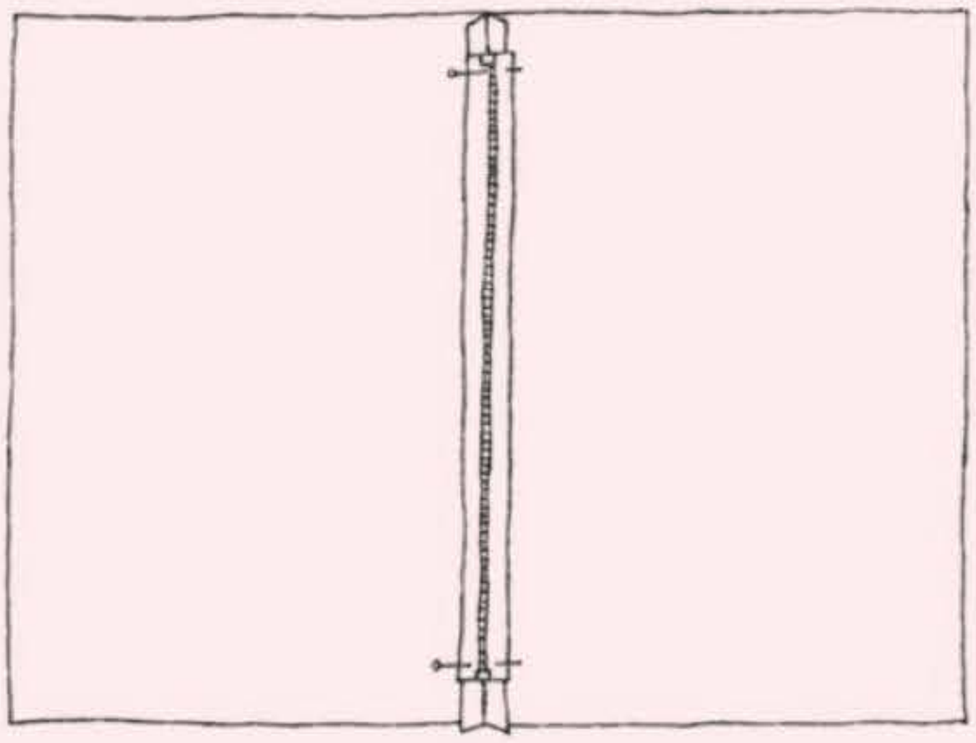


fig 2

3 Place a pin across the other end of the zip just over the end of the 2.5cm (1in) side seam (**fig 2**).

SEWING THE ZIP

1 Before you sew your zip into place, make sure that the zip slider is facing outwards towards the side seam rather than tucked under the zip, or it will be difficult to get hold of it to open later as you are stitching.

2 Remember to change your machine stitch length to normal before you sew on the zip! Change the foot in your machine to a zipper foot.

3 Starting about 5cm (2in) down from the slider and on the zip upper edge, stitch the zip into place, positioning your machine stitching half way between the teeth and the edges of the zip tape.

4 When you reach the bottom of the zip keep the machine needle in the fabric, lift the foot and turn the fabric to stitch across the bottom of the zip. Repeat this to turn and stitch up the other side of the zip.

5 When you are opposite your starting point, keep the needle in the fabric and raise the machine foot. Now take hold of the slider and push it so that you undo the zip beyond the machine needle. By moving the slider out of the way you can keep your line of machine stitches straight. Otherwise the bulk of the slider would make your needle run off a little and you wouldn't get a straight line.

6 Now continue stitching up to the top of the zip about 6mm (¼in) beyond where the slider would stop. Keep the needle in the fabric, raise the foot and turn to stitch across the top of the two ends of the zip.

7 Turn again to stitch down the other side of the zip to where you first started. Make sure you finish off the stitching securely by going backwards and forwards a few times, then snip the threads to release (**fig 3**).

8 Now you need to undo the long stitches which you worked earlier. If you undo a few at one end you should be able to pull a thread to easily undo the remainder. You can now open and close your zip. Trim off the end of the zip if it is too long, about 6mm (¼in) outside the stitching (**fig 4**).

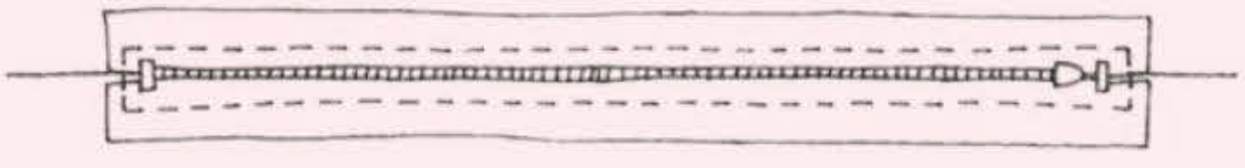


fig 3

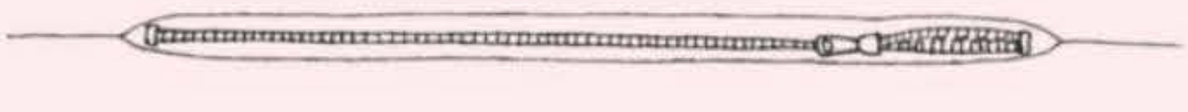


fig 4

TOP TIP

Most sewing machines come with a separate zipper foot, but if yours doesn't then you can buy one from a sewing machine shop or online.

You can adjust the zipper foot so it is on the left or the right side of the sewing machine needle. This allows you to sew the zip without the presser foot applying pressure to the zip teeth. Without a zipper foot the teeth would get caught in the feed dogs and the fabric then wouldn't move to allow it to be stitched.

Mayfair Wash Bag

This roomy waterproof wash bag has ample space for all your lotions and potions.

Photography and illustrations
© CICO books

BRIGHTEN UP YOUR bathroom with a real splash of colour. This vibrant wash bag from Caro Cutts and Alison Beadnell of Caro London is a perfect weekend project.

Combining eye-catching prints and finished off with a delightfully spotty binding, this wash bag would make a wonderful gift – if you could bear to give it away. The waterproof coated cotton means that it's practical as well as pretty, and perfect for keeping all your bits and pieces organised while travelling. The wash bag is nice and roomy too – no frustrating arguments with the last toothbrush that just won't fit in!

Caro London is known for its beautiful print fabrics as well as meticulous attention to detail, especially in fabric construction. The company ethos is one of "beautiful combinations of pattern and colour, enhanced by stitched or applied trimming details" – just the thing.

YOU WILL NEED

- 50 x 70cm (20 x 27½in) waterproof coated cotton print
- 50 x 70cm (20 x 27½in) contrast waterproof coated cotton print
- Nylon zip, at least 42.5cm (17in) long
- 50 x 70cm (20 x 27½in) non-fusible interlining
- 1.5m (1¾yd) of pre-folded bias binding

NOTES

Seam allowances are 1cm (⅜in) unless otherwise noted
The zipper must be nylon and at least 6cm (2⅜in) longer than the final opening
WS: Wrong side
RS: Right side

For stockist details, see page 160

CUTTING OUT

1 Copy the templates on page 53, enlarging them by 200%, and trace the pieces onto pattern paper.

2 Cut two zip gussets and one main body in the main waterproof coated cotton print. Cut two end gussets in contrast waterproof coated cotton print, and cut all pieces in waterproof lining and interlining.

PREPARING THE FABRICS

3 Baste all the gusset interlining pieces to the wrong side of all gusset lining pieces, so that they become one layer. Baste all three main body pieces of outer, lining, and interlining together, sandwiching the interlining in the middle with the waterproof fabrics right side outwards, stitching 7mm (¼in) all around the edges.

SEWING THE ZIP

4 Open the zip and place the RS of one zip tape on the RS of the zip gusset, with the tape aligned with the straight edge. Pin and baste. Stitch close to the teeth, using a zipper foot on the machine (**fig 1**).

5 Close the zip and fold it under along the stitching line, so that both zip and zip gusset are RS up. Lay the second zip gusset on the RS of the second side of the zip tape, in line with the first side. Pin and baste. Stitch close to the teeth, using the zipper foot (**fig 2**).

6 Lay the zip/gusset piece open, RS up, with the zip closed. Starting from the right-hand side, slide the zip gusset lining, RS up, underneath the zip/gusset piece to match up the straight edge of the zip gusset lining to the zip tape/seam edge under the left side of the zip. Pin and baste the layers in place. Edge stitch through all layers to the left side of the zip to catch the zip gusset lining in place. Fold the zip gusset lining piece back on itself along the seam just made, away from the zip (**fig 3**).

7 Repeat step 6 to add the zip gusset lining piece on the other side.

8 With all the zip gusset lining pieces now lying flat and folded away from the zip, add a second stitch line one machine foot width away from the first edge stitch on each side of the zip. Baste around the gusset piece 7mm (¼in) in from the edges all around (**fig 4**).

9 Working on the closed zip end first, lay the straight edge of the end gusset across the zip end, with RS together and matching to the seam edge of the zip/gusset piece. Stitch using a 1cm (⅜in) seam allowance, taking care when stitching through the zip (**fig 5**).

10 Fold the end gusset over away from the zip/gusset piece. Lay the end gusset lining RS up under the zip/gusset piece, matching the seam allowances. Edge stitch ▶

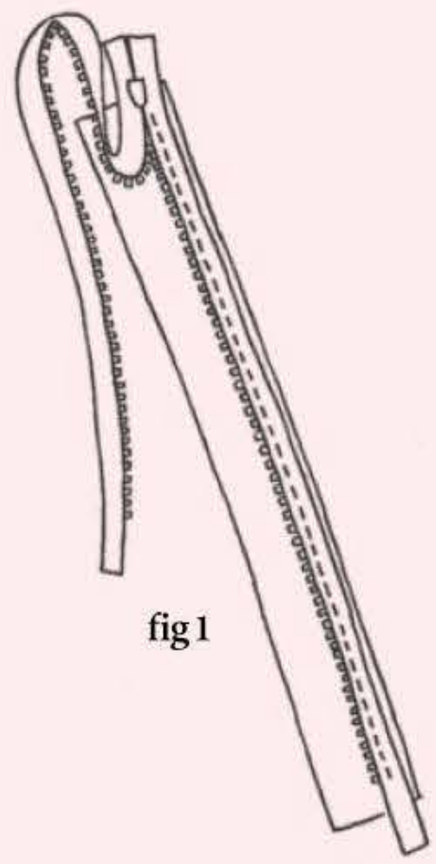


fig 1

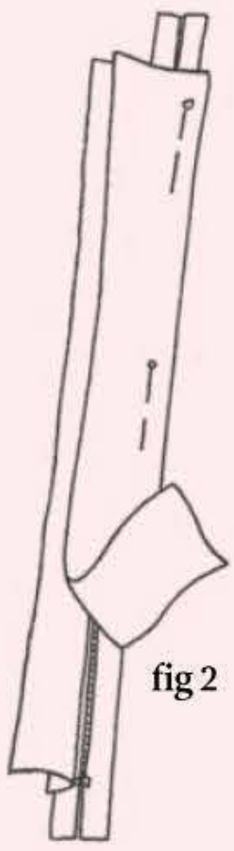


fig 2

fig 3

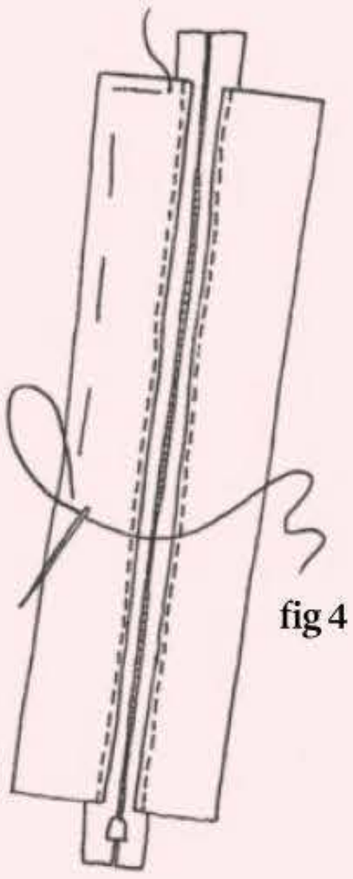


fig 4

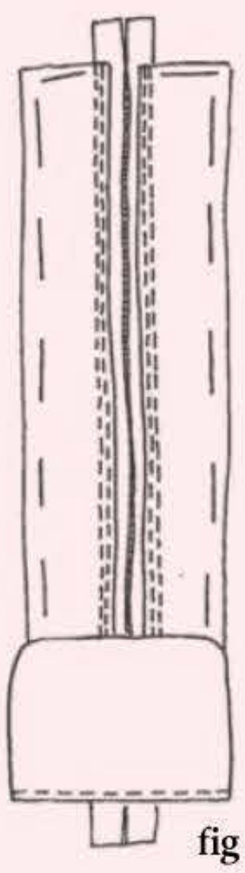


fig 5

A knotted zip tie in matching fabric completes the professional look.

along the seam of the end gusset, making sure you catch the end gusset lining in place underneath (**fig 6**).

11 Trim away the zip end to 1.5cm (5/8in) from the stitching line, making sure there are no sharp points. Fold the end gusset lining back behind its corresponding outer end gusset. Baste in place 7mm (1/4in) in all around. Add a second stitch line one machine foot width away from the first edge stitch.

12 At the open zip end, pull the zip back open to 5cm (2in) before the gusset seam end and lay the zip flat with teeth closely together. Lay the straight edge of the other end gusset across the open zip, matching exactly to the seam edge of the zip/gusset piece and with RS together. Pin in place. Stitch together. Repeat steps 10 to 11 to finish (**fig 7**).

CONSTRUCT THE MAIN BAG

13 Place the main fabric body piece RS down. With RS outward, pin the seam edges of the main body sides to the zip/gusset section carefully, matching the notches all around (**fig 8**).

14 Stitch all straight-to-straight sections of the seam with a 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance. Stitch the curved sections one at a time – start with all base curved corners with gusset panels RS down on the sewing machine and snip into the straight main body sections on top to allow them to spread out into the curve. Then sew all the top curved corners with main body RS down on the sewing machine, snipping the

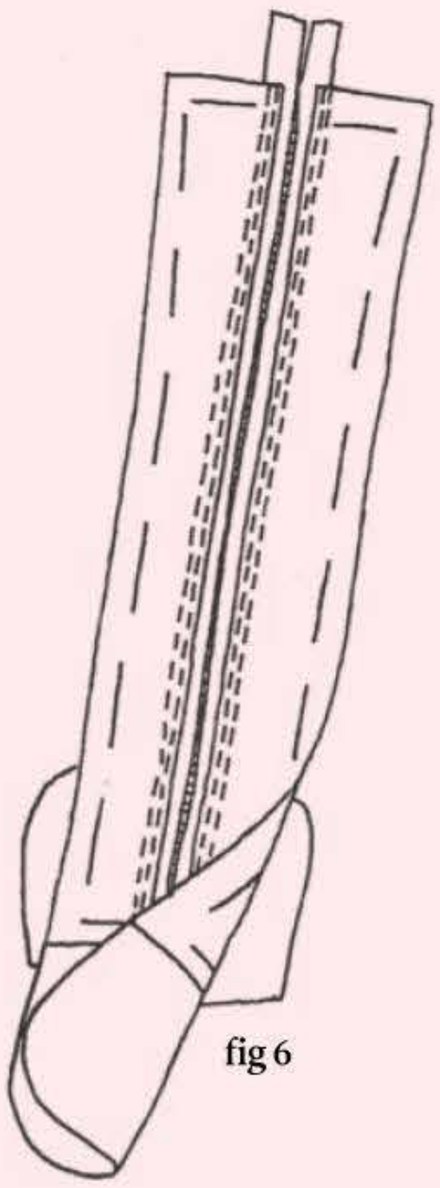


fig 6

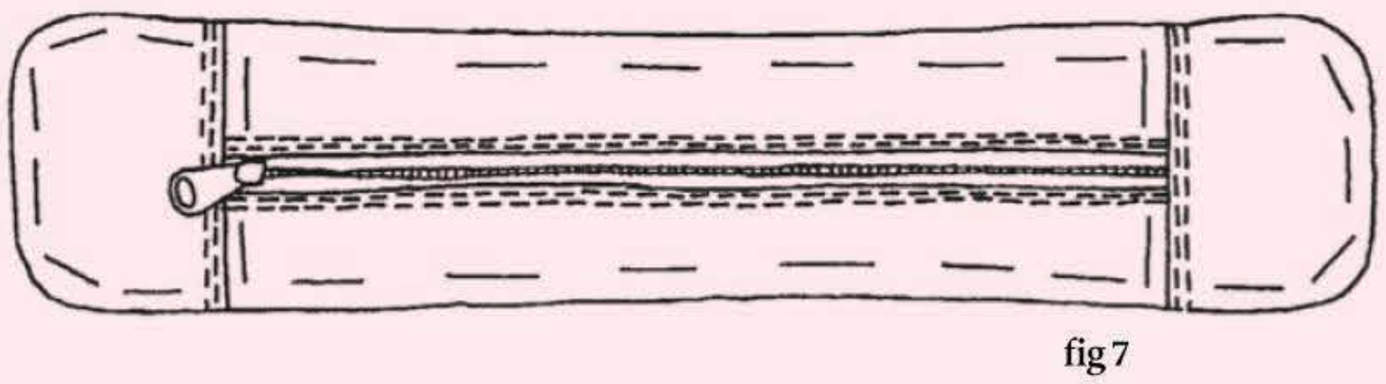


fig 7

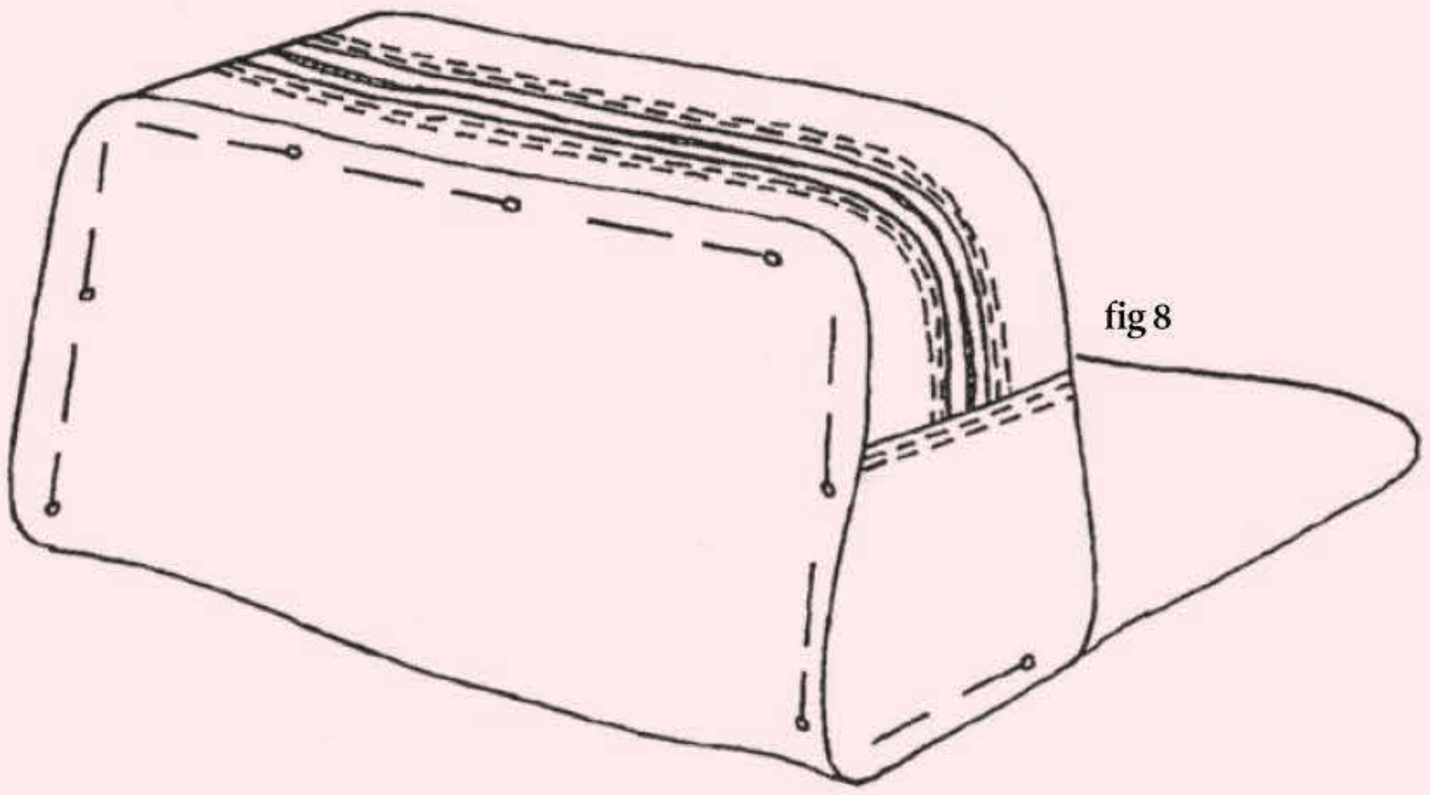


fig 8

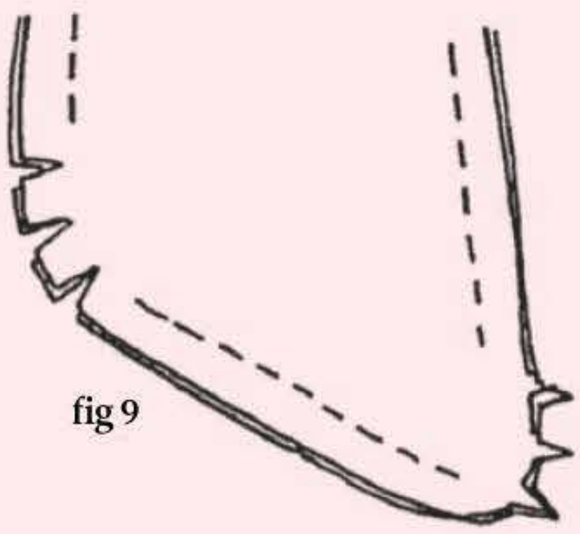


fig 9

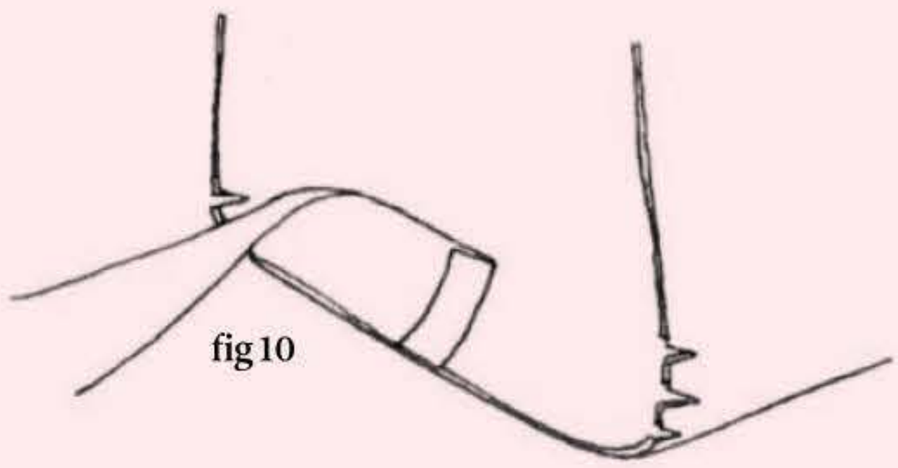


fig 10

fig 11

gusset seam allowance. The snips should be no more than 7mm (¼in) deep. Stitch around the curves with a 1cm (⅜in) seam allowance (**fig 9**).

BINDING THE EDGES

15 Measure the finished folded width of the pre-folded binding and trim the bag seam allowances to this measurement. Open out the long edges of the pre-folded binding and fold the end of the binding over by 1.5cm (⅝in). Start attaching the RS of binding at the centre of the base of one end gusset, matching raw edges together. Use the fold line as a guide and stitch slowly and steadily (**fig 10**).

16 Stitch into the fold of the bias tape and work your way around the entire bag. When you finish, overlap the binding ends by 1.5cm (⅝in). Trim off excess binding.

17 Fold the binding to the outside over the seam allowances. Starting at the inner raw end at the binding join, edge stitch the folded edge of the binding all the way around the entire bag. As you approach the end again, make sure that the outer folded end of the binding covers the raw end at the start, adjusting the fold if necessary (**fig 11**).

MAKE A ZIP TIE

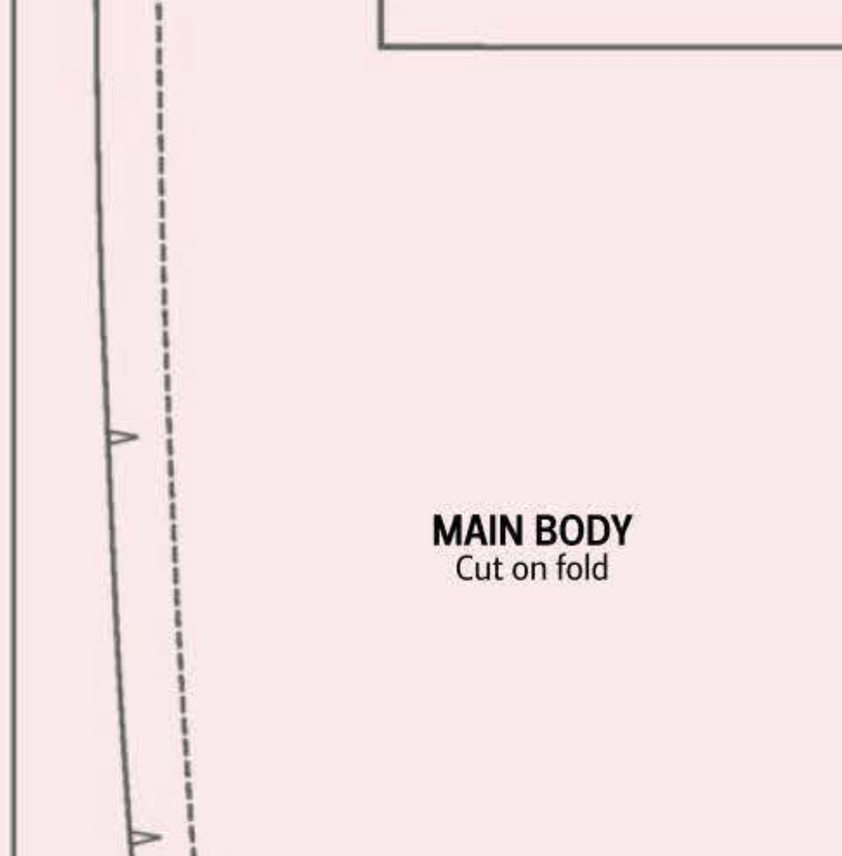
18 Cut a strip of your main waterproof cotton print, 17.5 x 5cm (7 x 2in). Fold the raw edges under to the WS by 1.5cm (⅝in) and press flat. Fold the long edges in to meet the middle, RS outward. Fold the strip in half lengthwise. Edge stitch down the sides to finish, then trim to 15 x 0.7cm (6 x ¼in). Thread through the zip pull and knot the ends.

AND SEW TO BED

This comprehensive book by Caro London is published by CICO Books at £12.99, paperback, and available from all good bookshops. It's packed with 30 beautiful projects for nightwear and accessories, from classic pyjamas to dressing gowns, hot water bottle covers, nightdresses and more. Call 01256 302699 quoting GLR 8AT to purchase a copy at the special price of £10.99 including free UK p&p. For more information, please visit *www.cicobooks.co.uk*.

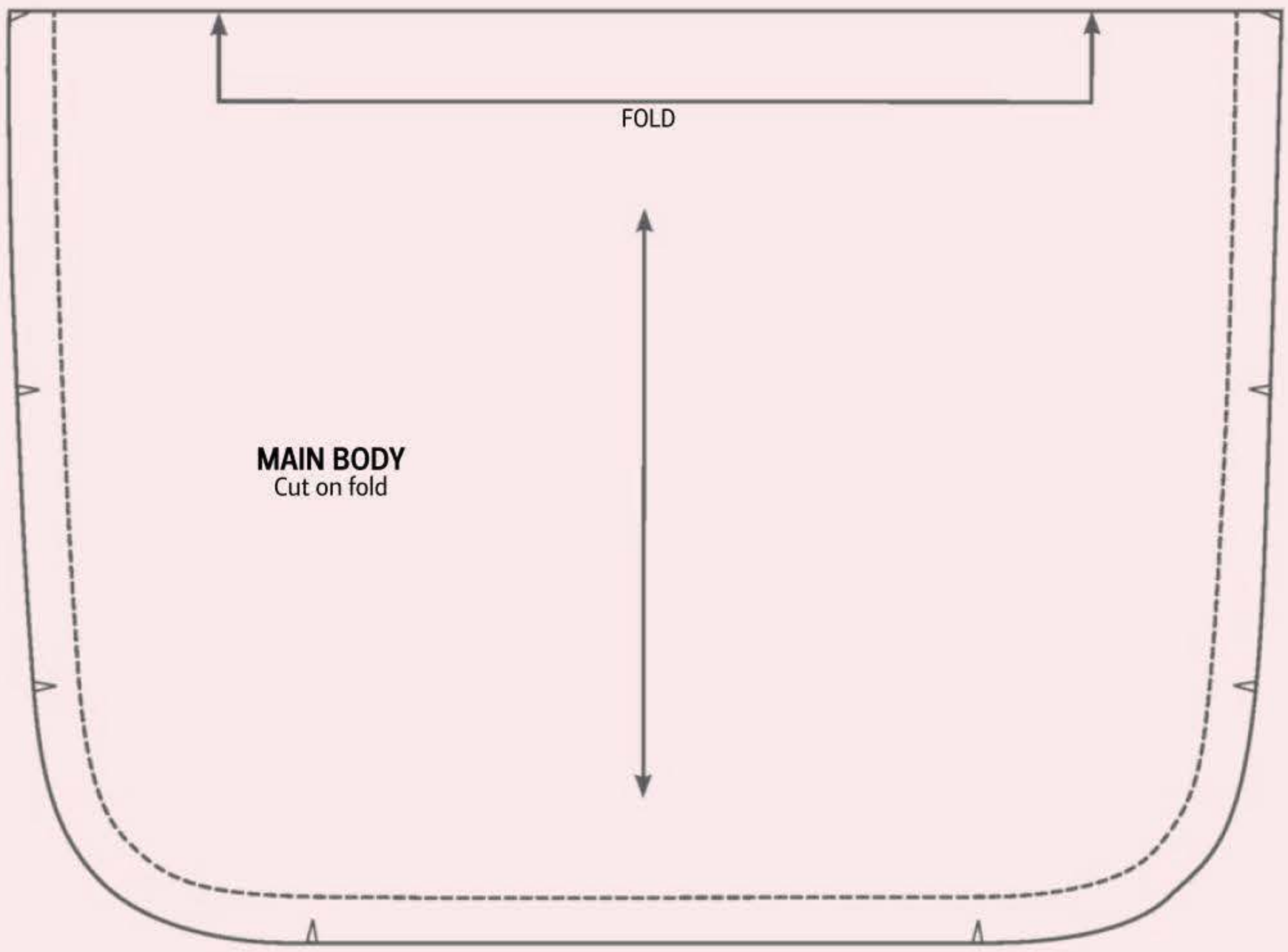
MAYFAIR WASH BAG

Enlarge templates by 200%



A contrasting binding helps make the design "pop"!

ZIP GUSSET
Cut on fold



MAIN BODY
Cut on fold

P76
Over The Rainbow
Bright and beautiful
mini quilt you'll love.

Hand Sewing

**Whip out your needle and thread,
pop on a thimble and get stitching!**

P58 **Tablet Sleeve**
Use satin stitch for this delicate feather.

P62 **ABC Sampler**
Decorate a nursery.

P70 **Carried Away Bag**
Practise your appliqué.

P75 **Modern Brights**
Try these funky Amy Butler fabrics.

P80 **Appliqué Hoops**
Use reverse appliqué for stylish artworks.

P84 **Cot Quilt**
Vintage Liberty prints.

Expert GUIDE

EMBROIDERY TECHNIQUES

Use our professional tips for a perfect start and finish to your stitches, every time.

Embroidery is a great way to embellish your fabrics and designs, adding colour, texture and patterns in just a few easy steps. It's an ideal way to show off your creativity as well, as it's so simple to change a few stitches or colours to create a look that's unique to you. If you're not sure where to begin, here are a few of the basics.

TRANSFERRING THE DESIGN

Most embroidery projects use templates, which you'll need to transfer onto your fabric before you begin.

1. Before you start tracing, press your fabric to ensure it's completely flat. Plan where you want to place the design and make sure you leave enough space.
2. The simplest way to transfer a design onto your fabric is to trace it. Hold the fabric right side up and place it over the template. Secure with masking tape so that it can't slip. If you struggle to see the design through the fabric, trace it onto tracing paper using a fine black pen. Then tape the design and fabric to a window or light box, and trace the design.
3. If your fabric is too thick to do this or it's impossible to trace through the window, trace the design on to tracing paper and secure to your fabric with pins. Following your pencil lines, tack around the design using small, even stitches in a contrasting coloured thread. Score along your tacking stitches with the tip of a needle and then remove the paper by tearing.
4. Alternatively, try dressmakers' carbon paper. Trace the design onto plain paper, then cut a piece of dressmakers' carbon

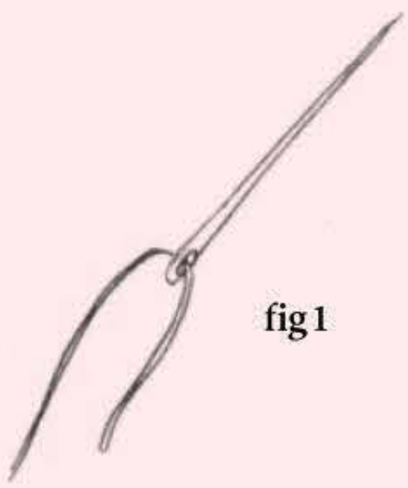


fig 1

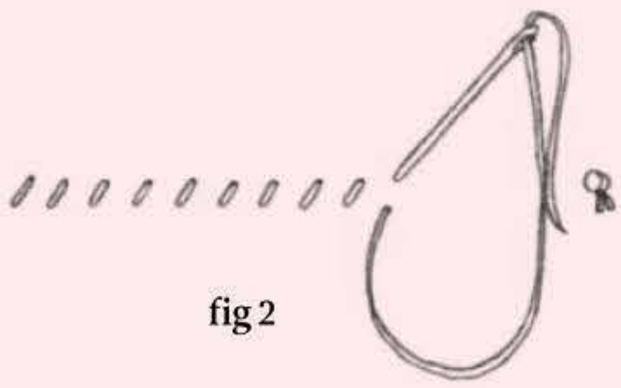


fig 2

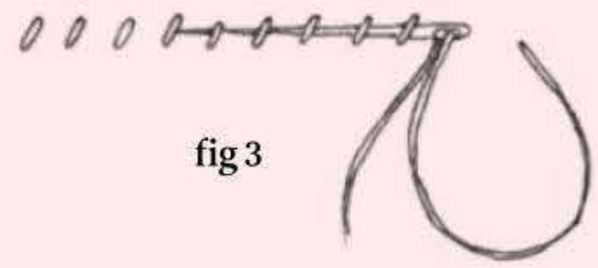


fig 3

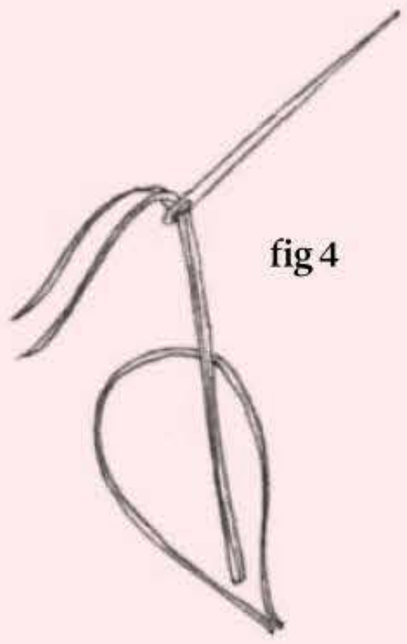
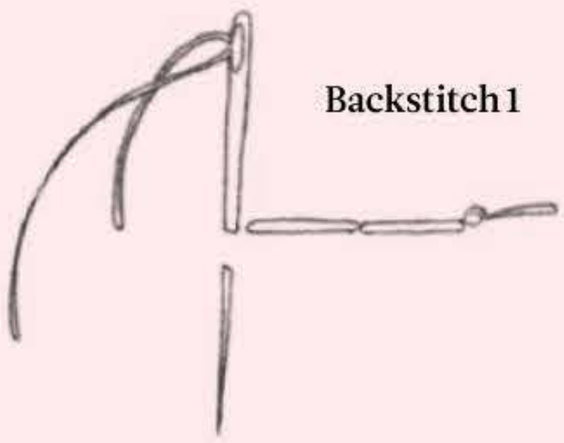
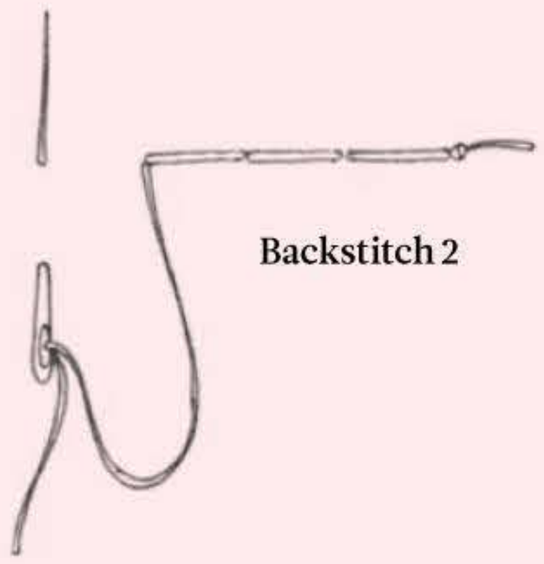


fig 4



Backstitch 1



Backstitch 2

> EMBROIDERY IS AN IDEAL WAY TO SHOW OFF YOUR CREATIVITY

paper to fit the design. Place the carbon paper over your fabric with the dark side next to the fabric surface. Place your paper template on top and trace over the outline using a blunt pencil or similar. Remove the carbon paper and you will have created an outline for your design.

STARTING STITCHING

Start your stitching and secure your thread with our neat methods.

WASTE KNOT

This is the simplest way to get started with your embroidery.

1. Knot one end of your thread and take it down through the front of your fabric, about 2.5cm (1in) from your starting point. Bring it back up to make your first stitch **(fig 1)**.
2. Begin stitching your design, making sure you stitch over your starting thread. Once your starting thread is secure, simply snip off the knot **(fig 2)**.
3. To secure the thread when you've finished stitching, weave it through the back of your stitches **(fig 3)**.

LOOP KNOT

This easy start to your embroidery is brilliantly neat.

1. If you're working with two strands, a loop knot is the easiest and neatest method. Cut a single length of thread and fold it in half to create a loop at one end.
2. Thread your needle with the two tail ends. Bring your needle up to the front of your fabric, leaving a small loop of thread on the reverse.
3. Make your first stitch and pass the needle through the loop on the reverse **(fig 4)**. Pull to secure the thread. Now continue with your stitching as normal.

EMBROIDERY STITCHES

Use our illustrations (below) to practise a number of the most common embroidery stitches. French knots are perfect for dots, seeds or eyes, while satin stitch is used to cover areas with colour.

WASHING

The washing stage can really bring your stitching to life and also restore the crispness of cotton or linen fabrics.

1. Before you start, check that your fabric and threads are colourfast and if there are any specific washing instructions for them. Fill a tray with warm water and add a small amount of bleach-free detergent. Gently immerse your fabric in the water.
2. Leave to soak for about 15 minutes then gently agitate it in the tray. To remove frame marks, rub the fabric together at the edge, avoiding the stitches.
3. For stubborn stains, empty your water. Place your stitching face up on the tray and use a sponge and fresh warm water to sponge that area.
4. Rinse under warm water to remove the detergent. To remove excess water, roll your stitching in a white towel. Place face down on a towel to dry.

SEAL YOUR FABRIC EDGES

Use these simple methods to stop your fabric from fraying and help prevent the thread getting caught in your stitching as you work.

1 Masking tape

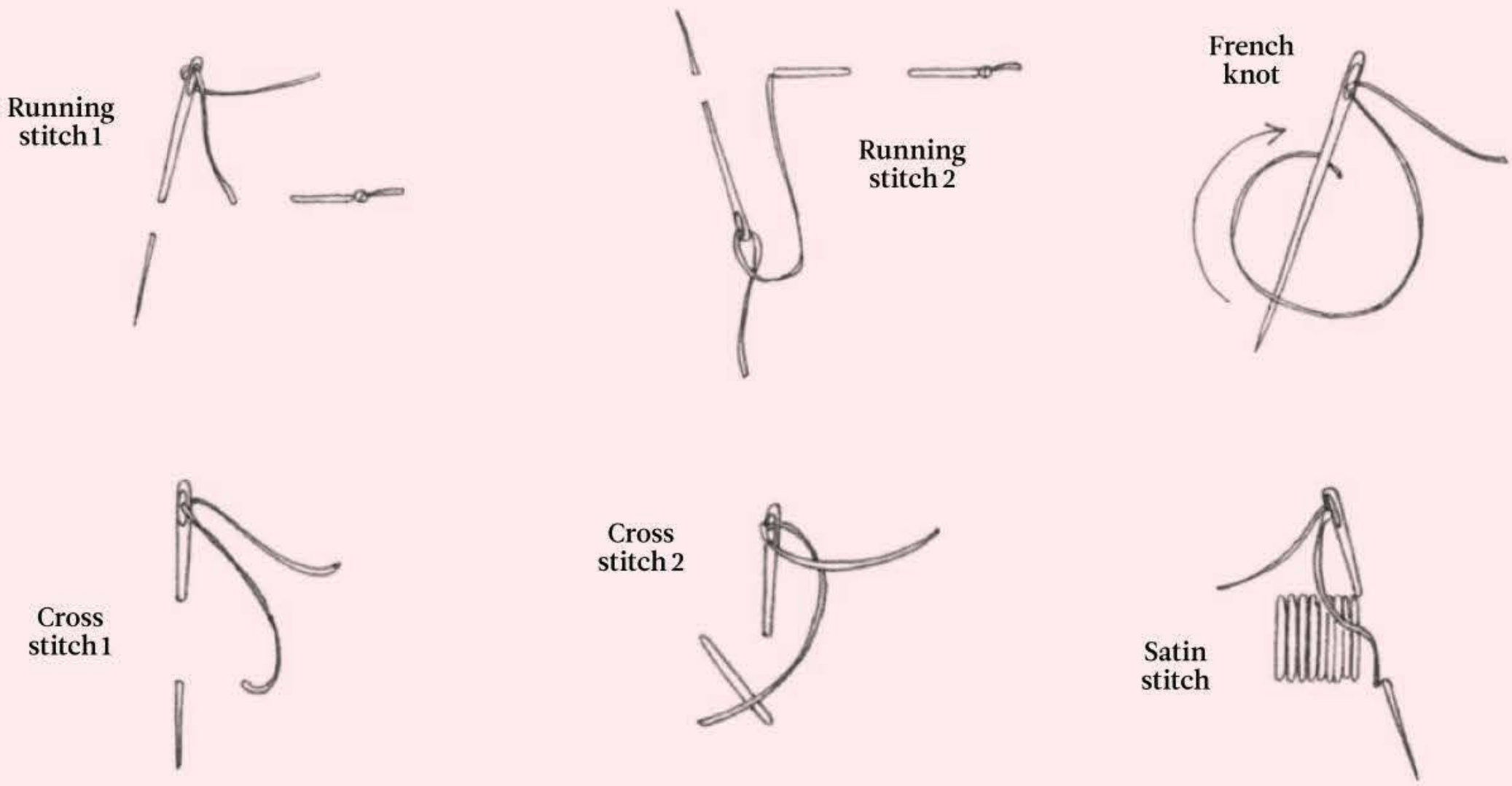
For a quick fix, seal edges with masking tape. It may leave a residue, so leave extra fabric around your design that you can cut off when you're finished.

2 Blanket stitch

If you've got more time, use a blanket stitch to stop your fabric fraying. This can also be used for a decorative finish.

3 Zigzag stitch

For the most secure finish, use a sewing machine to stitch a quick zigzag right up to the edges. This is the best choice for linen.



Tablet Sleeve

This simple sleeve makes a stylish accessory for any electronic tablet.

YOU WILL NEED

EMBROIDERY

- Water-soluble marker
- Six-strand embroidery floss (suggested colours: white, black, bright blue)
- Spotted Feather pattern (overleaf)
- Embroidery hoop

FABRIC

- 30 x 30cm (12 x 12in) linen or quilt-weight cotton, light colour (for front/embroidery)
- 9 x 22cm (3½ x 8¾in) linen or quilt-weight cotton in other colour for front flap
- 27 x 22cm (10¾ x 8¾in) linen or quilt-weight cotton in other colour (same as above or different) for exterior back
- 27 x 22cm (10¾ x 8¾in) linen or quilt-weight cotton for lining
- Two 27 x 22cm (10¾ x 8¾in) pieces low-loft batting

NOTES

- The dimensions shown here will make a case perfectly sized for an Apple iPad. You might need to adjust the measurements slightly to fit another brand of tablet.

> MADE WITH TWO CONTRASTING LINEN FABRICS PLUS A BEAUTIFUL TWEEDY LINING, THIS CASE IS FINISHED OFF WITH A GRAPHIC SPOTTED FEATHER

For stockist details, see page 160

YOUR TABLET COMPUTER might be the epitome of modern technology, but that doesn't mean it can't be improved with a little old-fashioned needlework. And what better way to bring a homely touch to cold electronic devices than with a beautifully embroidered case? It's not just pretty, of course, but practical too, with two layers of fabrics plus batting to help protect your tablets from bumps and knocks in your handbag.

Made with two contrasting linen fabrics plus a beautiful tweedy lining (though of course you can choose whatever fabric or print you want), this case is finished off with a graphic spotted feather. Embroidered in large satin stitches, it's bold and beautiful and sure to draw admiration! Take time to place it correctly on the front of the case, and use an embroidery hoop to ensure you keep a good tension on the fabric as you work.

EMBROIDER THE MOTIF

1 Using a water-soluble marker, draw a 20 x 22cm (7¾ x 8¾in) rectangle in the upper right-hand corner of the front fabric. Transfer the Feather pattern to your fabric within the bottom portion of the 20 x 22cm (7¾ x 8¾in) rectangle. The Feather motif should be at least 2.5cm (1in) away from the edges of the rectangle.

2 Place the front fabric in the embroidery hoop and, using the floss and needle, carefully embroider your Feather motif. Use the template and photographs for guidance. Work the feather shaft in stem stitch, the down lines in backstitch or long stitch, and the main body of the feather in satin stitch.

ASSEMBLE THE BAG

3 Cut out the embroidered front fabric along the drawn lines of the rectangle (**fig 1**).

4 With right sides together, pin and sew the front flap fabric to the right-hand, 22cm (8¾in) edge of the cream exterior fabric. Press the seam allowance toward the front flap fabric (**fig 2**).

5 Topstitch the front flap fabric 3mm (⅛in) from the seam (**fig 3**).

6 Lay the exterior front, face up, on top of one of the batting pieces, making sure you line up the edges. With right sides together, place one of the lining pieces on top of the exterior front, again lining up the edges. Pin and machine stitch through all the layers along the right (top of sleeve) edge. Open up the fabric and press the seam allowance towards the exterior piece. Repeat this step with the remaining batting, lining and exterior pieces, this time sewing along the left edge instead of the right. ▶

fig 1

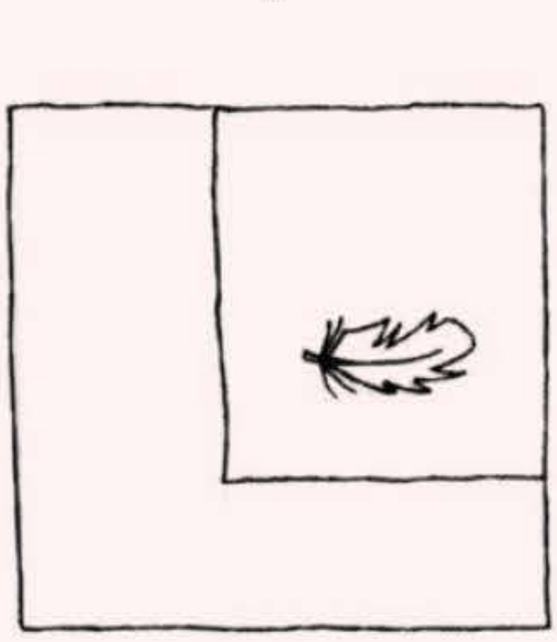


fig 2

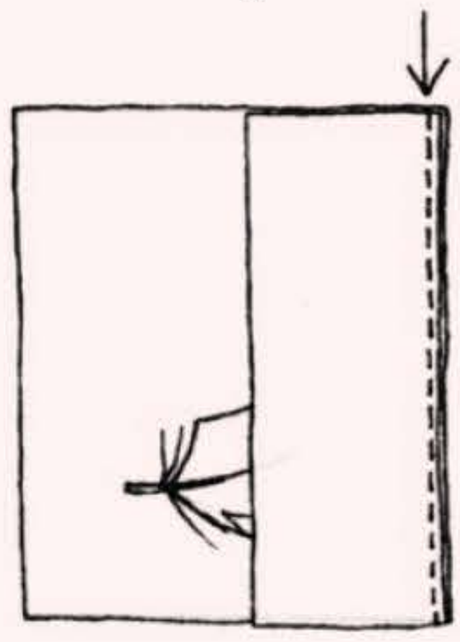
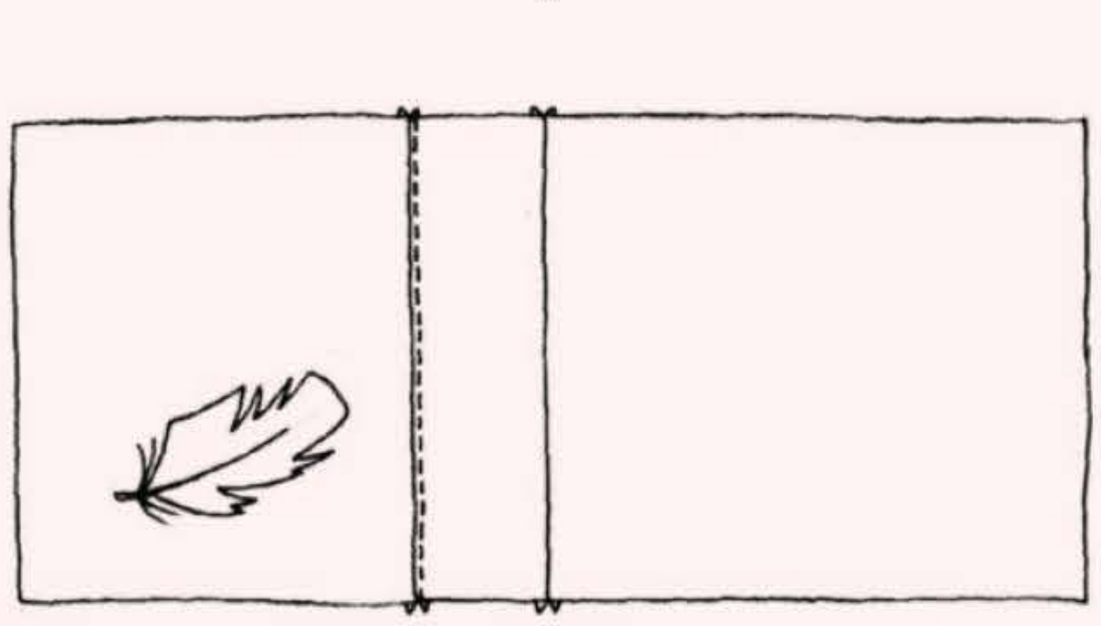


fig 3



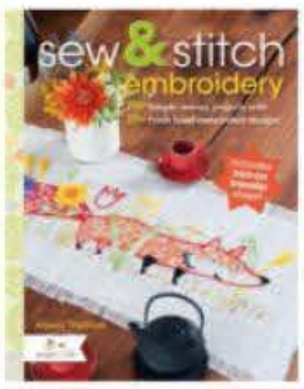
> PUSH OUT ALL THE CORNERS ON THE CASE SO THEY ARE NICE AND CRISP – A KNITTING NEEDLE WORKS WELL FOR THIS

Choose soft, thick fabrics for maximum protection.

7 With RS together, lay the front piece on top of back piece, matching front to back and lining to lining. Pin where the seams meet in the centre. Both seam allowances should be facing away from the lining pieces. Pin around the remaining edges. Sew around the entire edge starting 5cm (2in) in on the short edge of the lining and ending 5cm (2in) in on the other side of the short edge of the lining, leaving a gap (**fig 4**).

8 Clip the corners and then turn the sleeve right-side out through the opening in the lining. Push out all of the corners so they are nice and crisp (a knitting needle works well for this). Turn the raw edges of the lining inward 6mm (¼in) and sew shut with 3mm (⅛in) seam allowance.

9 Push the lining to the inside of sleeve. Pin and sew around the entire opening 3mm (⅛in) from the opening (**fig 5**).



SEW & STITCH EMBROIDERY

This stylish book is packed with fresh, modern embroidery designs and sewing projects, and is perfect for anyone looking to brighten up their home with a needle and thread. Published by Krause Publications (£14.99, paperback) *Sew & Stitch Embroidery* contains more than 20 projects and more than 30 embroidery designs, and comes with a sheet of iron-on transfers. The book is written by Alyssa Thomas of Penguin & Fish (*www.penguinandfish.com*), an illustrator, designer and artist.

fig 4

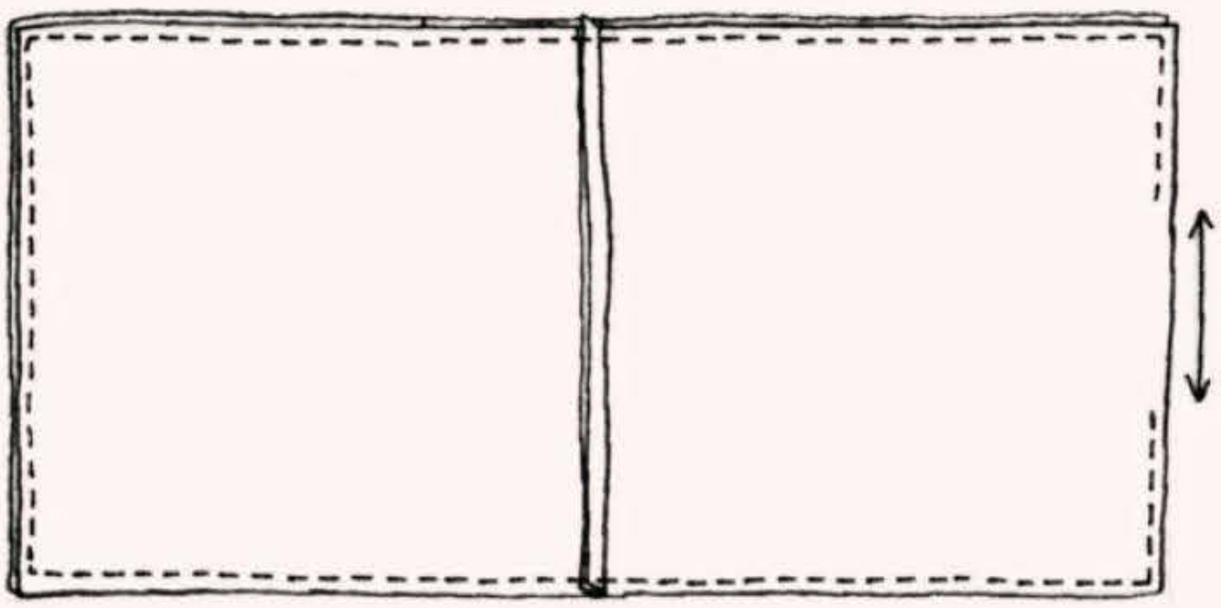
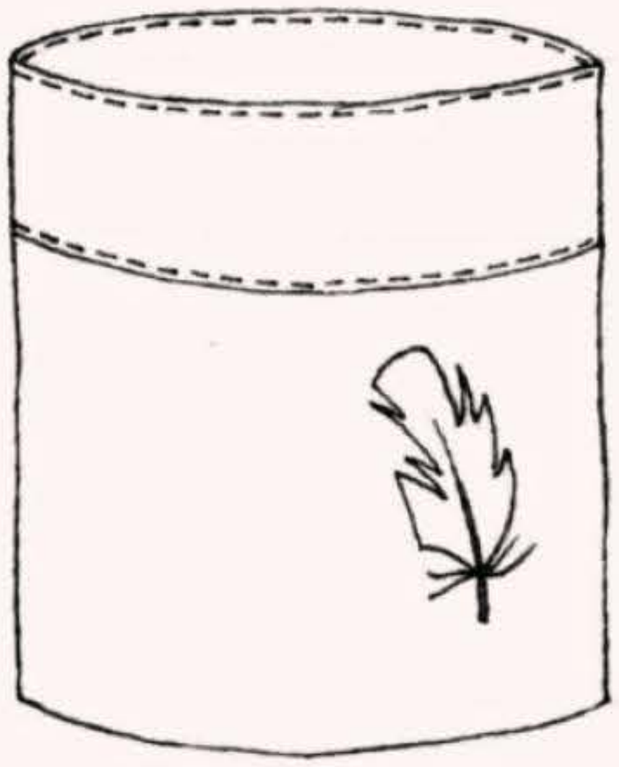


fig 5



SPOTTED FEATHER PATTERN

Actual size

For a slightly different look, try this alternative feather design.

ABC Sampler

This delicate hanging is perfect for a nursery wall and makes an ideal baby gift.

THERE'S SOMETHING REALLY special about filling a small child's room with handmade things – surrounding them with love, delicate stitches and beautiful objects.

These colourful letter designs are so versatile as well. If you don't want – or don't have time – to make the complete piece, choose some letters and embroider them separately: as monograms on clothes or bags, or slogans on cushions or book covers. With plenty of stitches and colours to play with, you're sure to have fun.

YOU WILL NEED

FOR THE EMBROIDERY

- DMC stranded cotton embroidery thread (see pages 70–73 for colours)
- Small embroidery hoop, approx 10cm (4in) in diameter

FOR THE WALL HANGING

- 28 squares of linen in various colours, 15 x 15cm (6 x 6in)
- 1m x 60cm (39¼ x 23½in) linen or cotton for backing
- 5 rectangles of linen for tabs, 6 x 10cm (2¼ x 4in)
- Matching sewing thread
- 9 pompoms, 5cm (2in) in diameter
- 60cm (23½in) ribbon or cord for hanging
- 60cm (23½in) length of dowel, 1.5cm (⅝in) in diameter
- Spray paint or acrylic paint
- Drill

For stockist details, see page 160

EMBROIDER THE DESIGN

1 Transfer the letters and illustrations from the following pages to your fabric squares, positioning them centrally. Place in the embroidery hoop and embroider as per the stitch guides, using two plies of floss. When complete, remove visible transfer marks and press.

CONSTRUCT THE FRONT PANEL

2 On the reverse of each square, draw a seam line 1cm (⅜in) in from the edge on all four sides, using a water-soluble pen. Place the letter B face up on a table. Place letter A on top of B face down (so the neat sides of the embroideries are touching, making sure they are both pointing in the same direction). Pin along the drawn seam line and machine stitch together, following the drawn line. Open up and press flat (**fig 1**).

3 Repeat with letters C and D, placing D on the table and C on top, face down. Pin and sew along the left side. Open and press flat.

4 Place the CD rectangle on the table face up and place the AB rectangle on top face down. Pin and sew along the left-hand side. Open up and press flat. This has created your first row (**fig 2**).

5 Repeat with the six other rows, checking they all face in the right direction.

6 When you have seven rows each of four squares, place the ABCD row on the table face up and place the EFGH rectangle on top, face down but rotated 180 degrees. (You want to sew the bottom of the ABCD row to the top of the EFGH row.) Pin together and stitch along the bottom edge.

7 Repeat with the other rows, making sure they all face in the right direction. Press.

ATTACH HANGING TABS

8 Make the tabs by folding each 6 x 10 cm (2¼ x 4in) rectangle in half lengthways, right sides facing, then sew down the long raw edges. Turn each right side out and press so the seam is in the middle. Fold in half widthways to make a loop and pin to the right side of the sampler with the majority of the tab laying on the letters and the folded edge facing towards the base of the hanging. Pin one tab at each end, one in the middle and the remaining two evenly spaced between them (**fig 3**).

FINISHING

9 Place the backing fabric on top of the letters and tabs, right sides facing, and ▶

fig 1

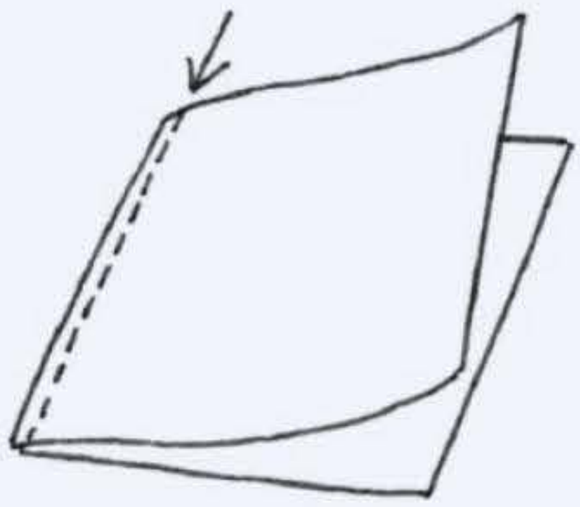


fig 2

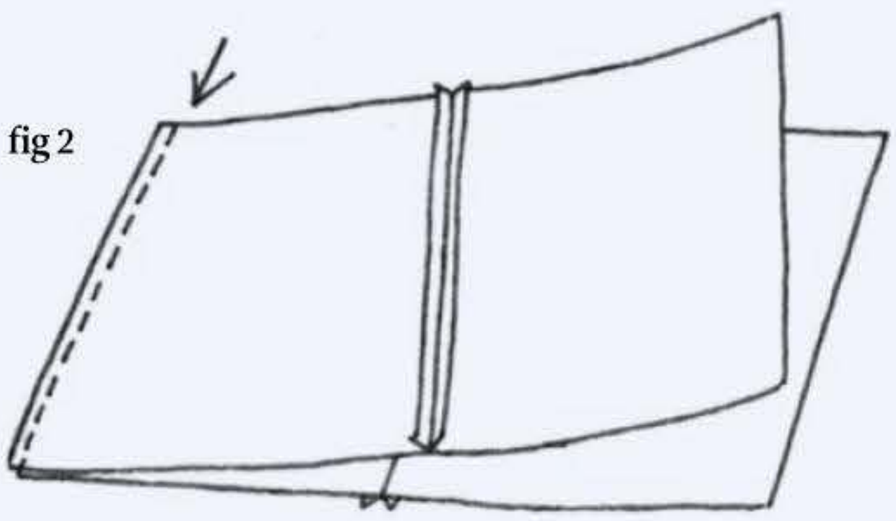
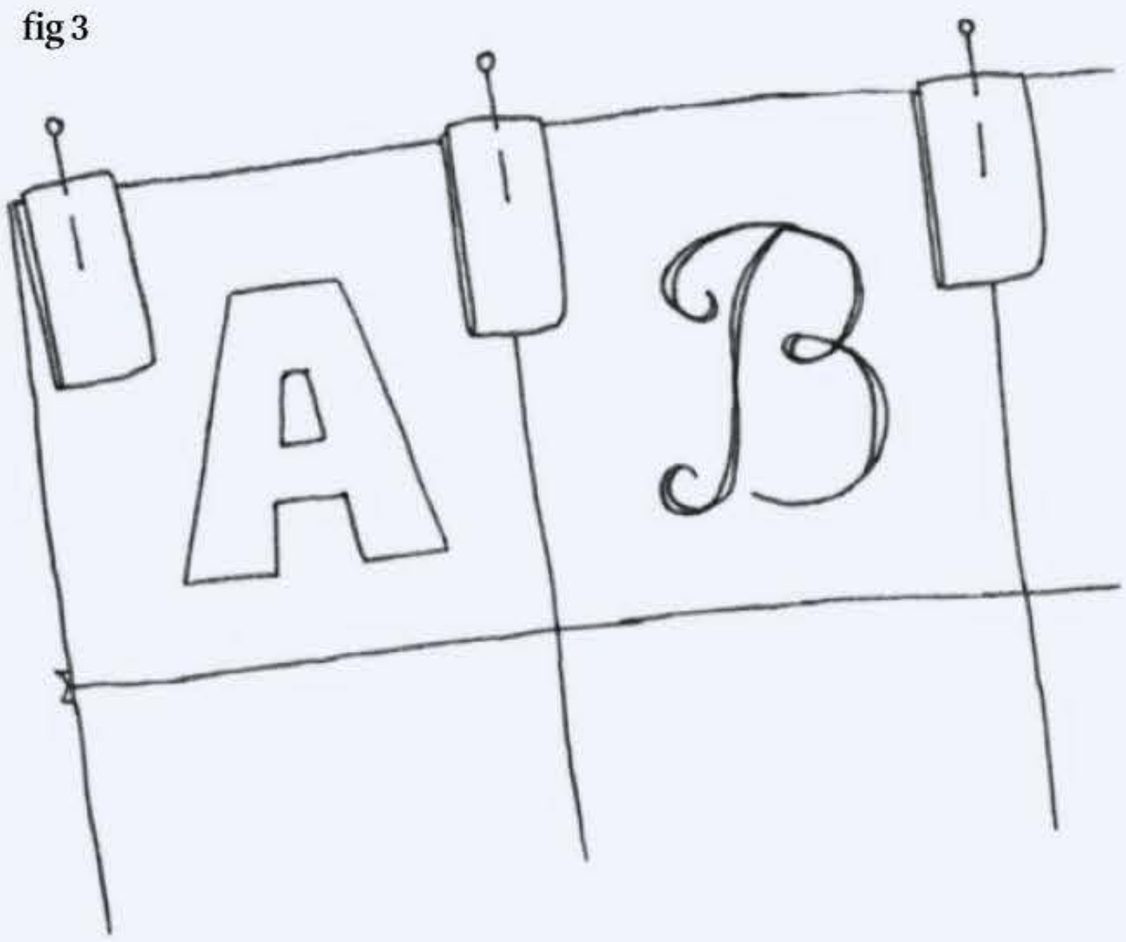


fig 3



pin carefully all around. Machine stitch 1cm (⅜in) in from the edge (make sure you sew far enough in to catch all the edges of the squares) all around, remembering to leave a turning hole along the bottom.

10 Trim away any excess fabric, cutting the corners on the diagonal to make the hanging less bulky at the corners. Now remove the pins and turn the entire hanging right side out. The tabs should pop out along the top. Push out the corners neatly, using a knitting needle if necessary. Hand stitch the turning hole closed and press well.

11 Attach thread to the pompoms and hand stitch them in a row along the bottom of the hanging.

TO HANG THE HANGING

12 Paint the dowel and allow to dry thoroughly. Drill a hole vertically through the dowel 2cm (¾in) in from each end. Thread one end of the ribbon or cord through one hole and tie a knot. Thread the dowel through the tabs, then thread the other end of the ribbon through the other hole and tie a knot to secure.

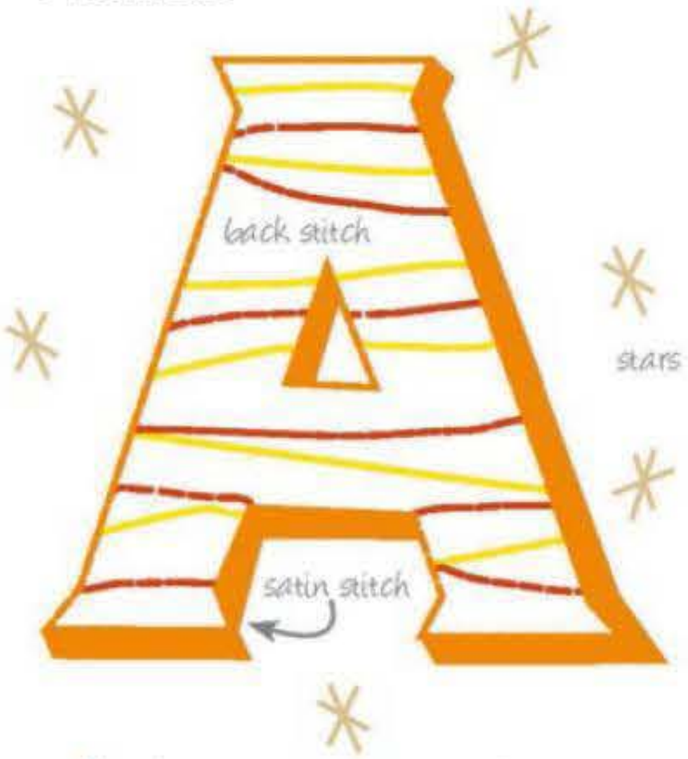
LITTLE SEW & SEW

Little Sew & Sew by Christine Leech (published by Quadrille, £12.99) is the perfect book for those interested in sewing and embroidery. The 30 original and versatile makes include 15 sewing projects that range from simple bags and pretty purses to simple cotton tops and delicate detachable collars, as well as 15 unique patterns for adding embroidery to the finished pieces. The projects and patterns can be mixed and matched to create an almost inexhaustible number of combinations.

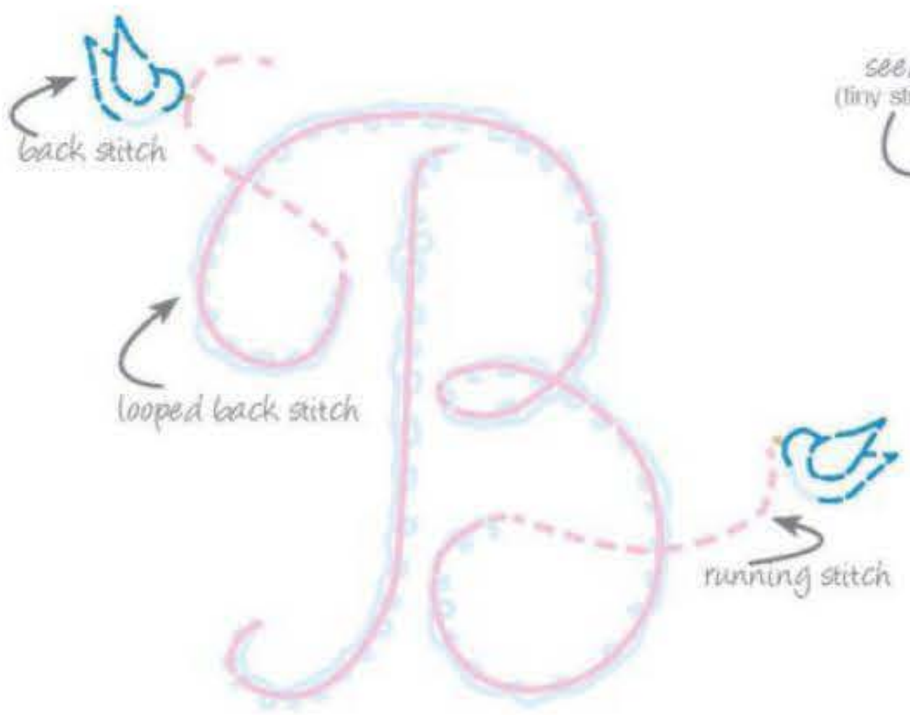
> ATTACH THREAD TO THE POMPOMS AND HAND STITCH THEM IN A ROW ALONG THE BOTTOM OF THE HANGING

LETTERS AND MOTIFS

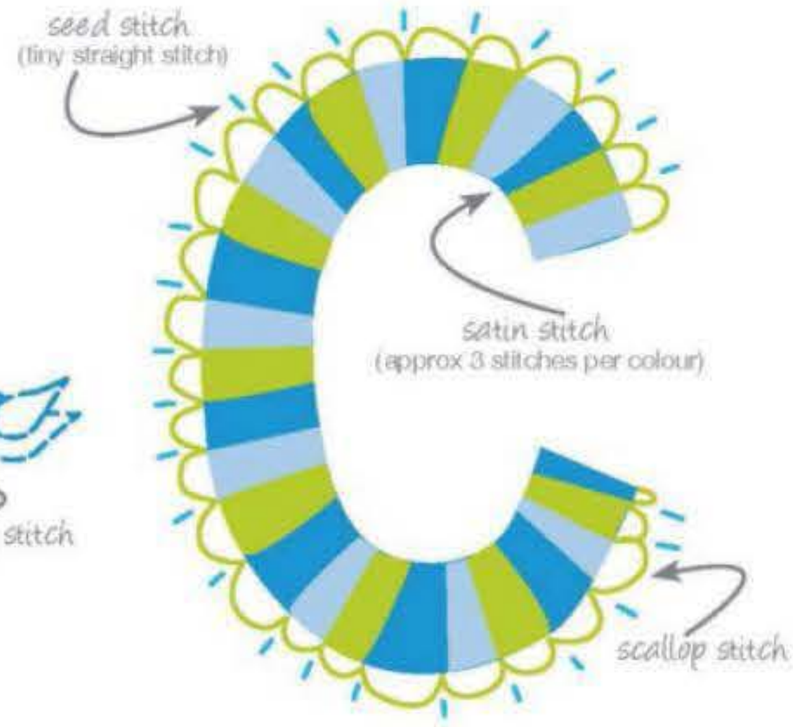
Actual size



A Mid orange 742 ■ Lemon yellow 3078
Gold 3852 ■ Dark orange 740

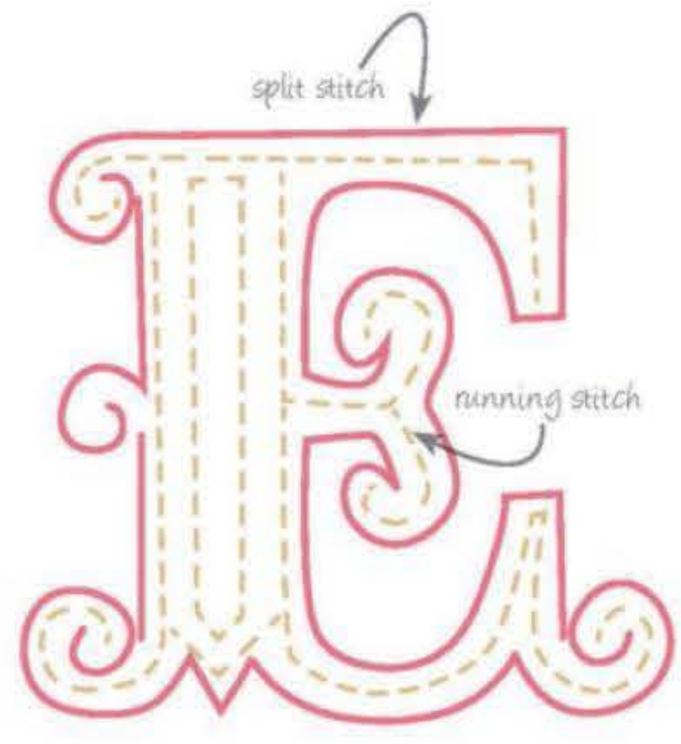


B Pale pink 818 ■ White ■ Turquoise 813

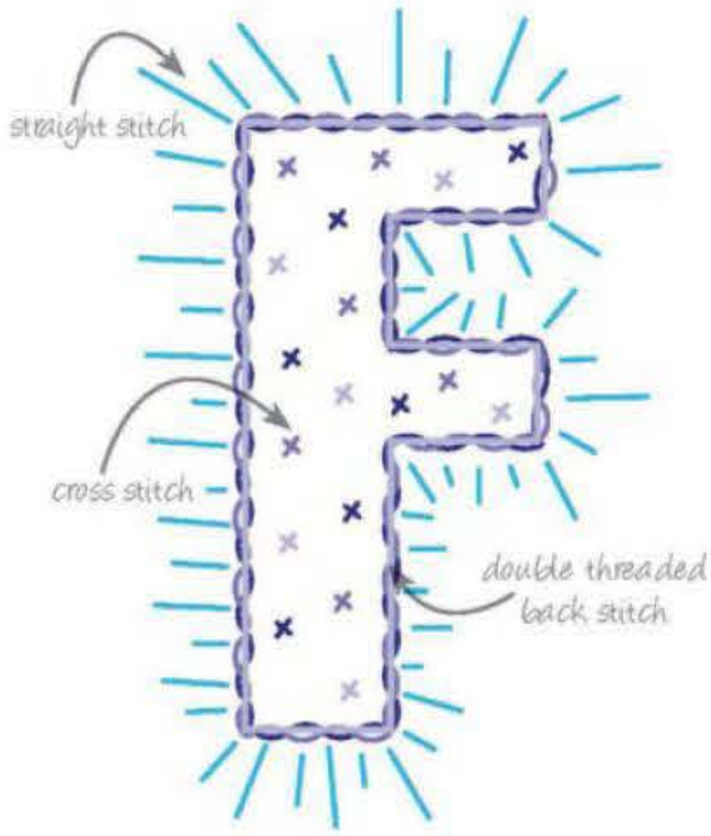


C Lime green 907 ■ Turquoise 813
Sage 3364 ■ Metallic blue E316

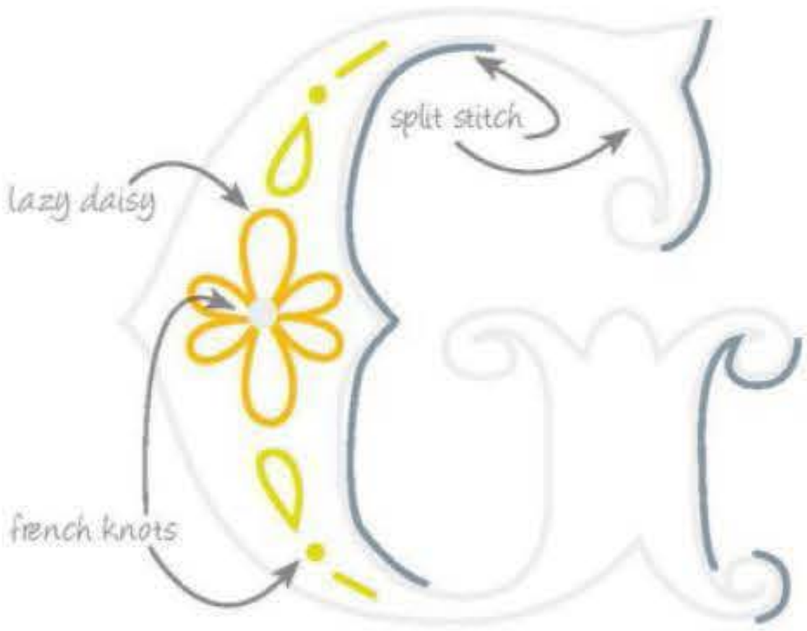
D White ■ Lemon yellow 3078
Mid orange 742 ■ Mid yellow 972



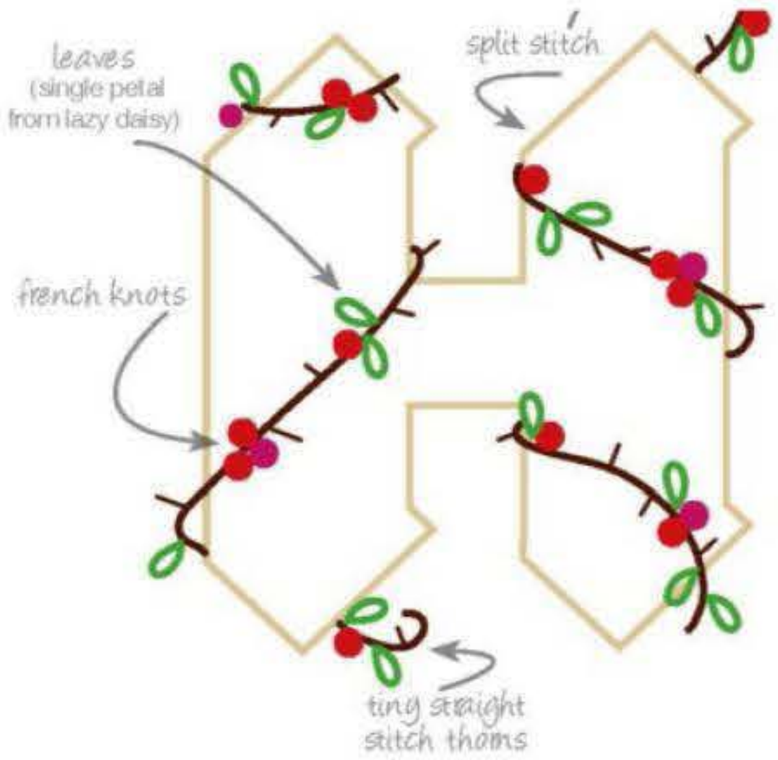
E Pink 962 ■ Pale bronze E677



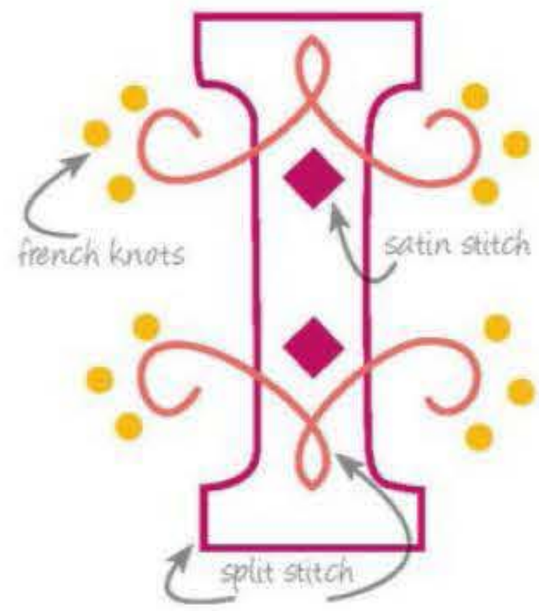
F Purple 340 ■ Metallic blue E334
Dark blue 996 ■ Dark purple 3835



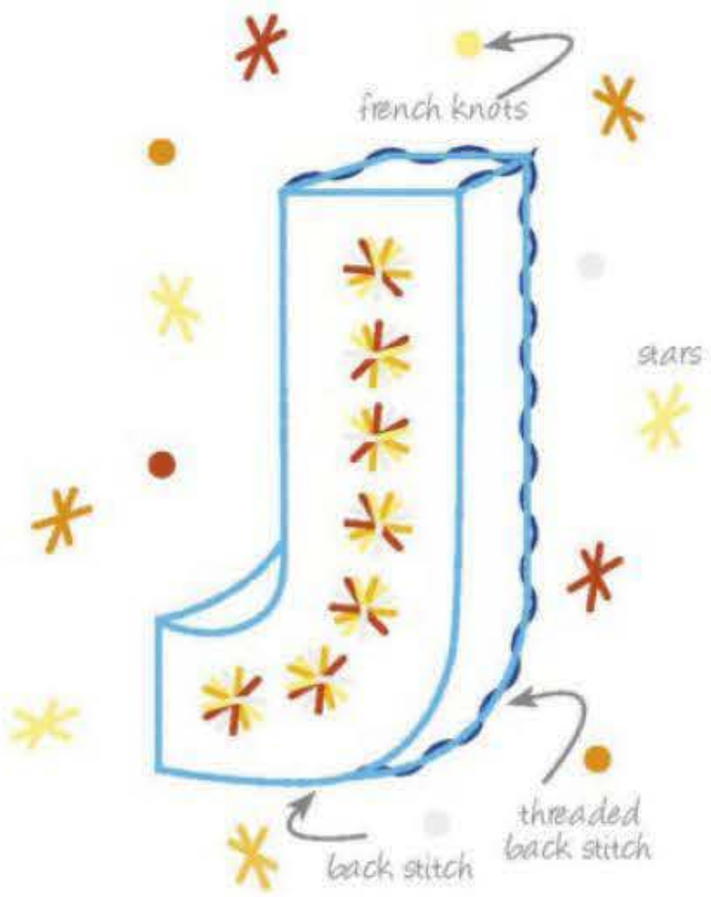
G White ■ Grey 317
Mid yellow 972 ■ Lime green 907



H Brown ■ Red 309 ■ Dark pink 321
Dark green 700 ■ Pale bronze E677



I Dark pink 321 ■ Pink 760
Yellow 743



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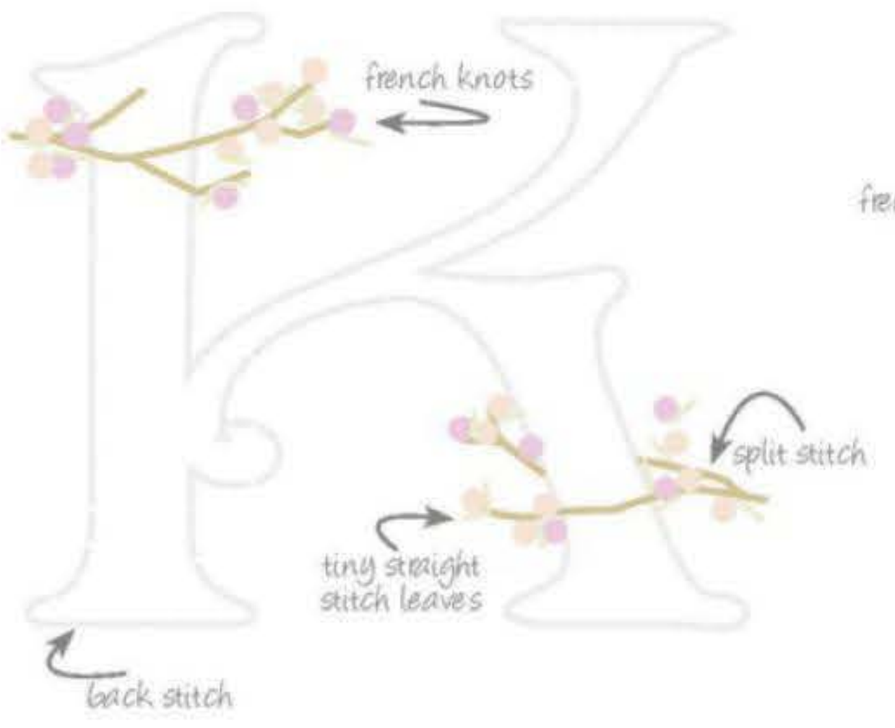
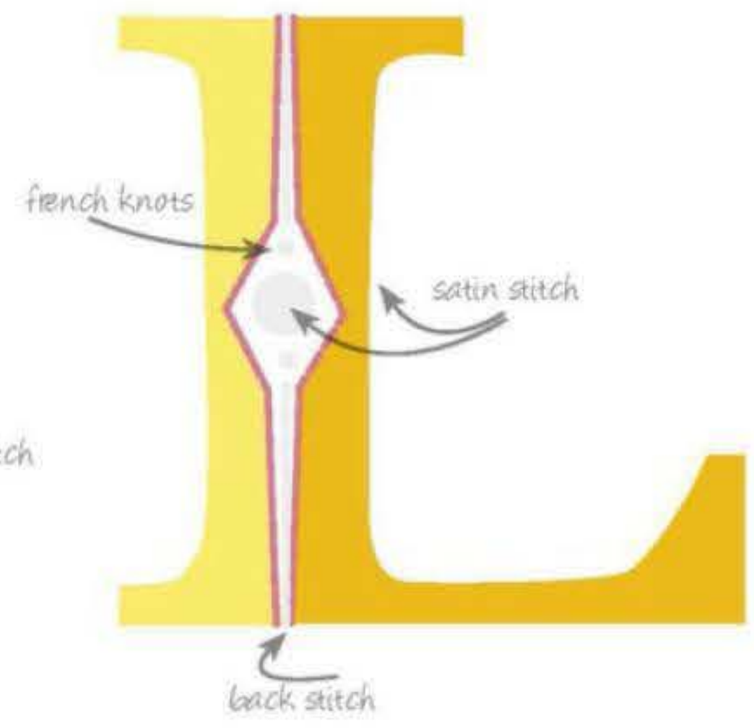
Yellow 792 ■ Lemon yellow 3078 ■ Mid orange 742

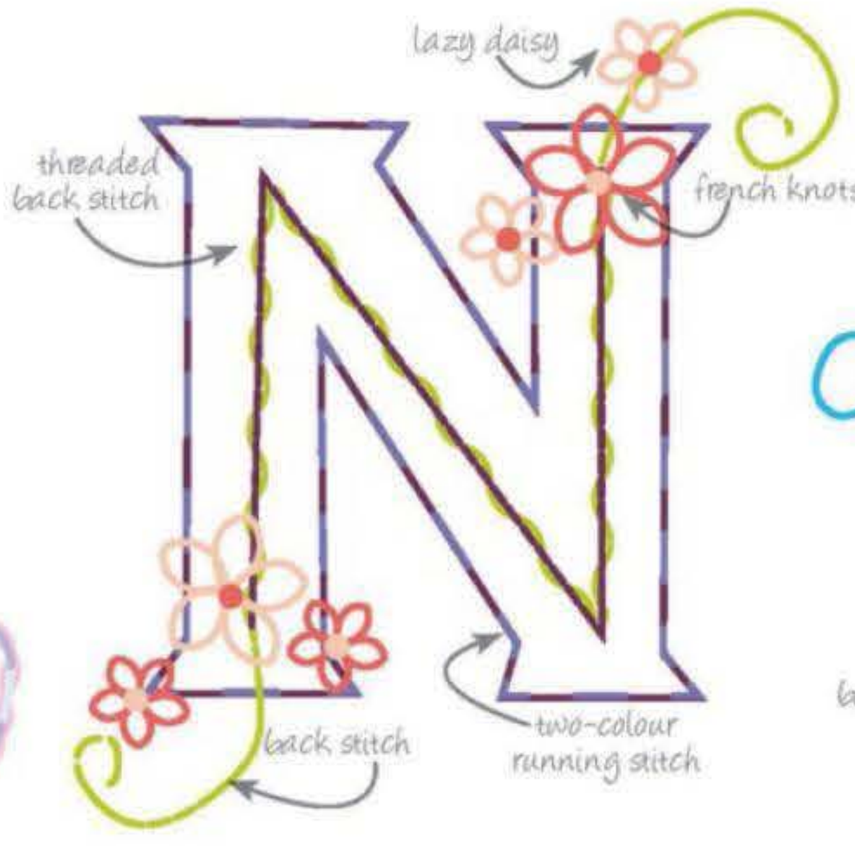


K White ■ Pink 761 ■ Pale pink 818
Beige 842 ■ Pale green 3819

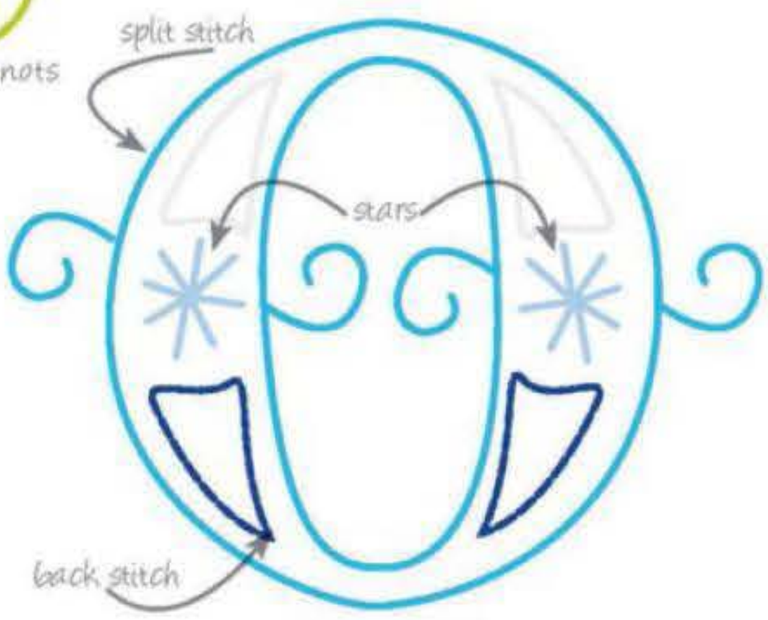


L Lemon yellow 3078 ■ Mid yellow 972
White ■ Pink 602

M Light blue 747 ■ Pale lilac 341 ■ Pale pink 818

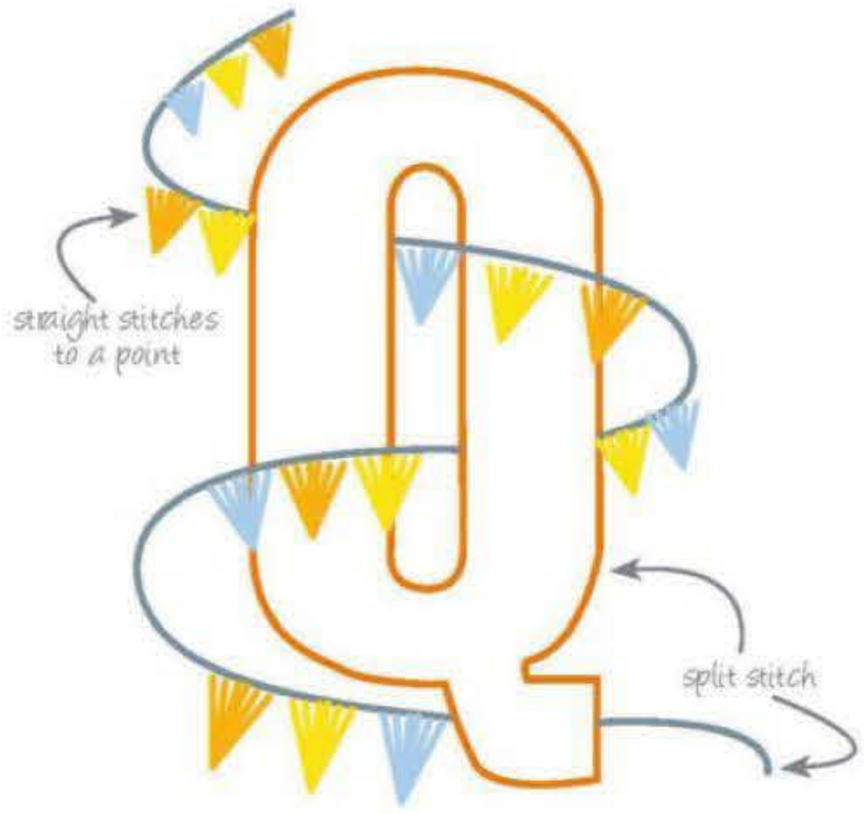


N Purple 340 ■ Dark purple 3835 ■ Lime 907
Peach 353 ■ Pink 760



O Blue 996 ■ White
Dark blue 824 ■ Metallic blue E334

P Blue 996 ■ Dark blue 824 ■ White
Yellow 792 ■ Lemon yellow 3078 ■ Mid orange 742



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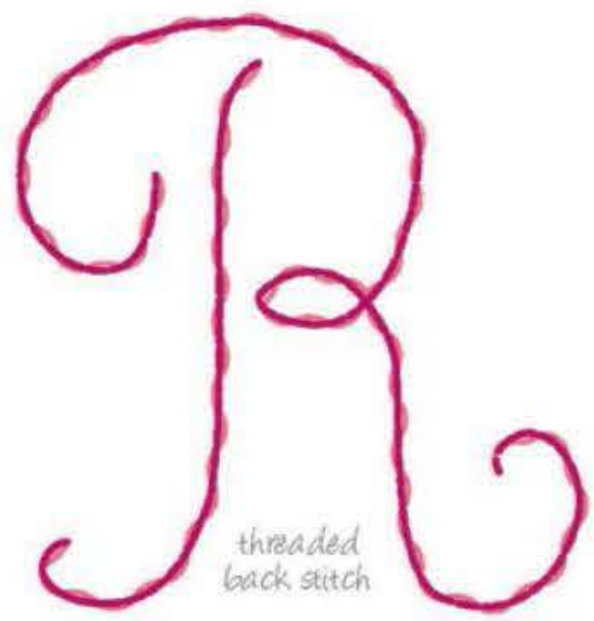
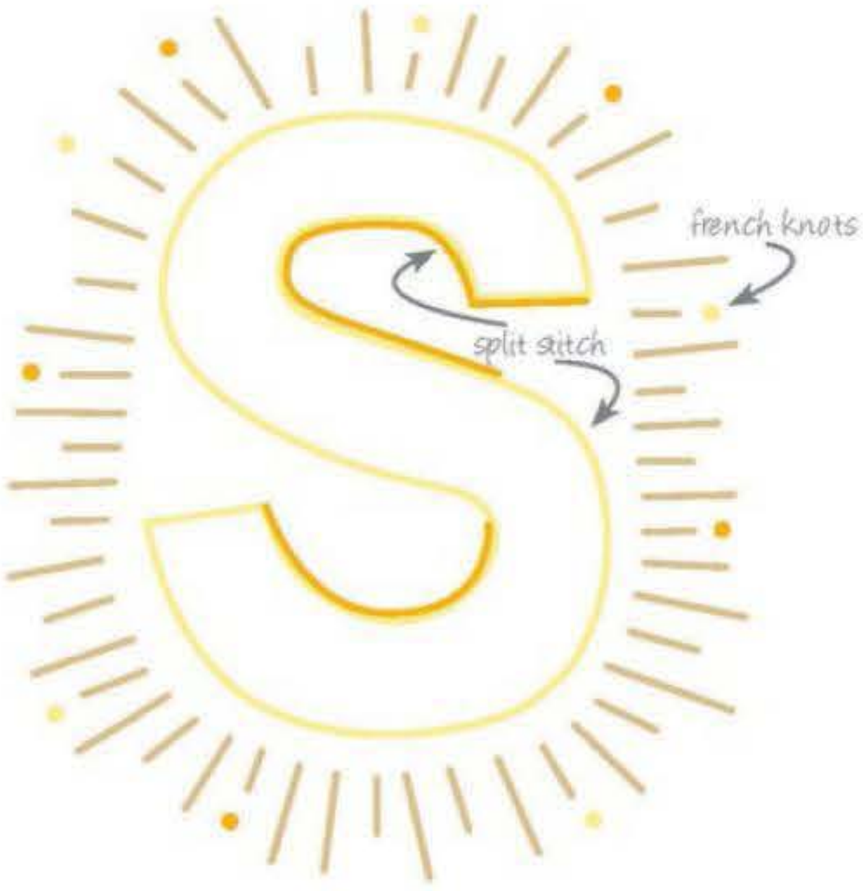
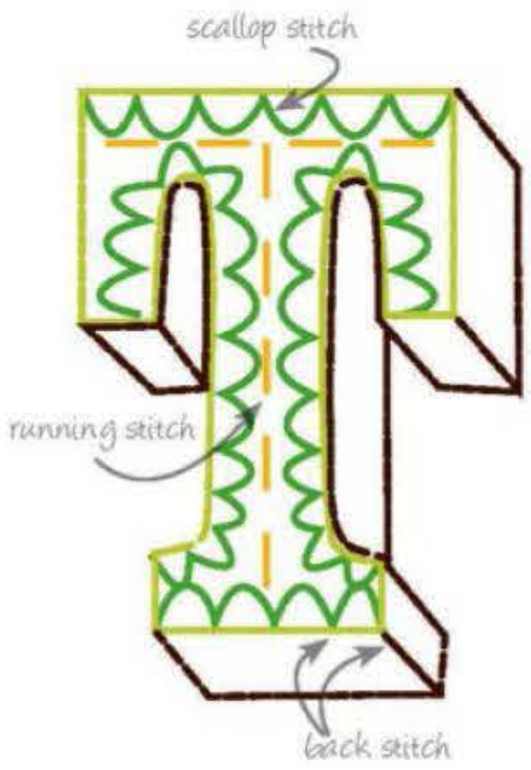
Pale blue 747 ■ Yellow 743



R Dark pink 321 ■ Pink 3706

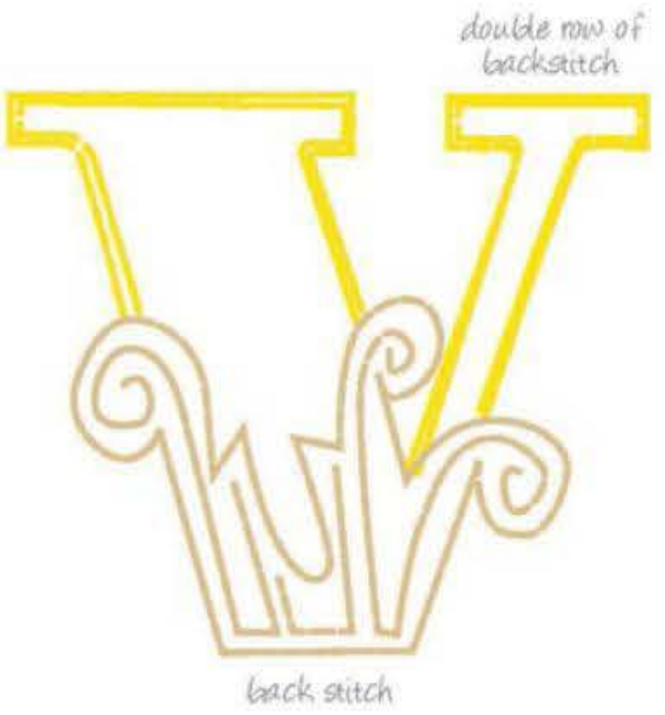


S Lemon yellow 3078 ■ Yellow 743
Gold 3852

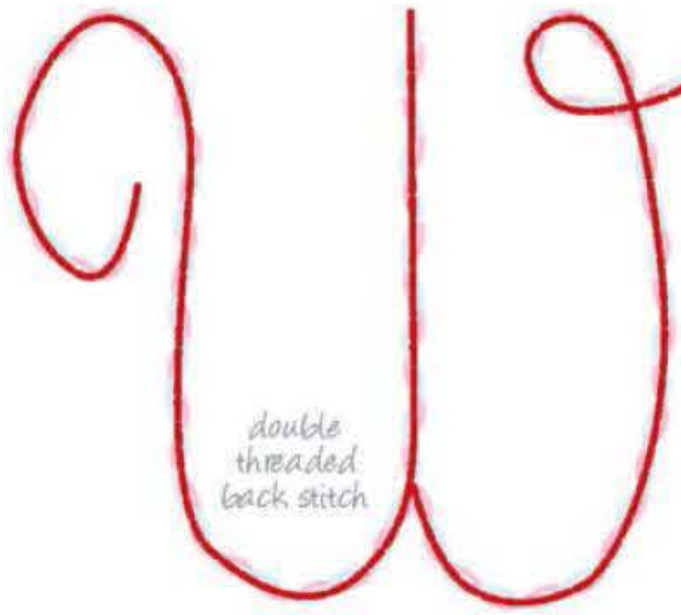


T Lime green 907 ■ Pea green 702
Brown 3371 ■ Lemon yellow 3078

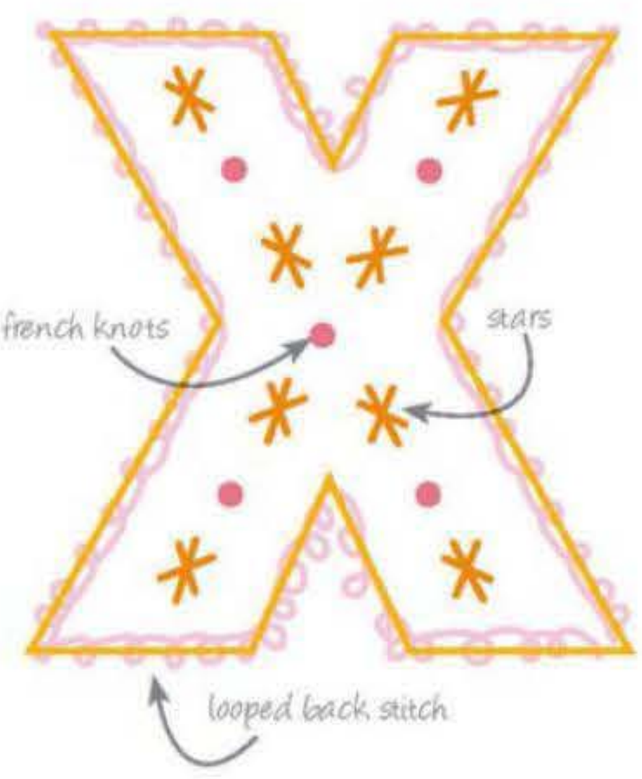
U Turquoise 813 ■ Dark blue 824
Pink 962 ■ Peach 353



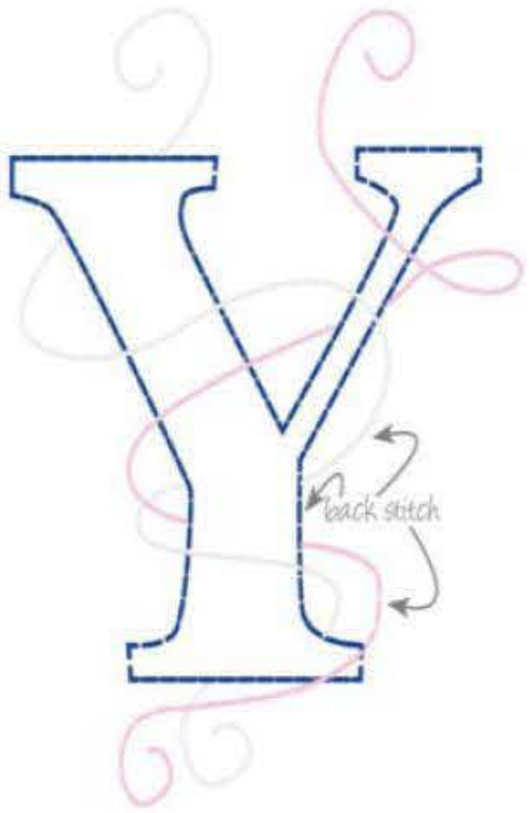
V Lemon yellow 3078 ■ Gold 3852



W Red 309 ■ Pale pink 818 ■ Pale blue 747



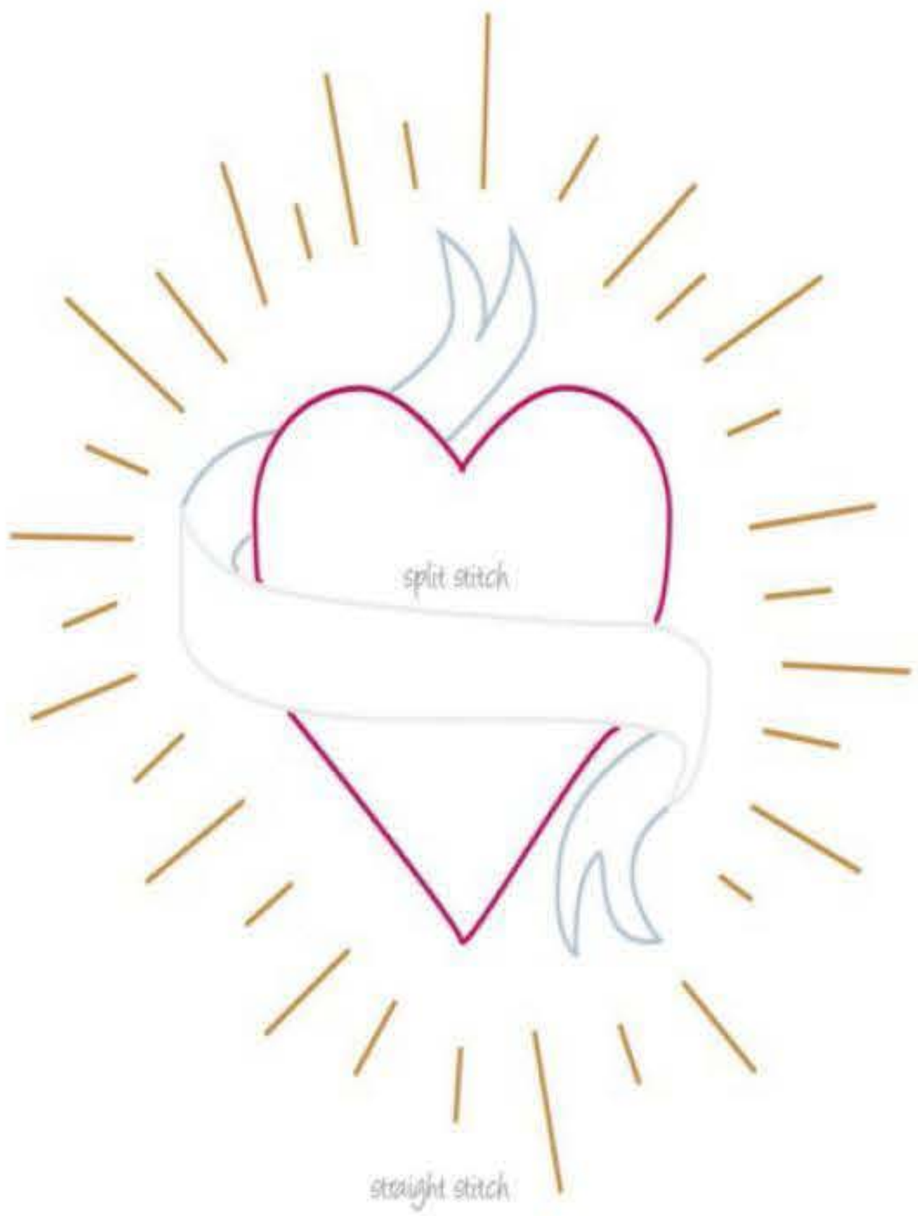
X Dark orange 740 ■ Mid orange 742
Dark pink 321 ■ Pale pink 818



Y Orange 740 ■ Silver E168 ■ Light orange 742
Pale blue 747 ■ Yellow 743

Z Pink 818

BLUEBIRD Lime 907 ■ Pink 818 ■ Dark pink 321
Blue 996 ■ Turquoise 813 ■ Yellow 3078



HEART Dark pink 321 ■ Light pink 3706 ■ White
Grey 762 ■ Gold 3852

“THE COLOURFUL LETTER DESIGNS ARE SO VERSATILE – EMBROIDER THEM INDIVIDUALLY IF YOU PREFER”

Expert GUIDE

HAND APPLIQUÉ

Use a range of techniques to add beautiful hand-appliquéd designs to any project you sew.

The word appliqué comes from the French verb *appliquér* which means 'to apply'. It is used to describe a technique used in many different crafts such as quilt making and pottery.

In sewing terms we use appliqué to describe a smaller fabric shape which is cut out then stitched onto a larger piece of base fabric.

There are several different methods for working hand appliqué and you should choose the one that not only suits your project, but also which you feel most comfortable with.

RAW EDGE METHOD

This is the simplest appliqué method but does require neater stitching when you stitch it on.

If the shape you want to appliqué isn't regular – for example an initial letter that wouldn't work the wrong side up – then you must reverse the shape before you begin.

To do this first draw the shape in reverse onto a piece of tracing paper. The easiest way to do this is to trace the shape onto the paper, then turn the tracing paper over and draw over the lines on the back. Use this reversed pattern shape to follow the method below.

1. First trace the pattern shape onto the paper side of your fusible web.
2. Carefully cut out the shape using fabric scissors, leaving approximately 6mm (¼in) around the shape.
3. Iron the fusible web pieces, paper side-up, onto the wrong side of the chosen fabrics then let them cool. Place a damp tea towel on top of the fusible web as this will help protect the web and stick the glue.
4. Cut out the pieces out along the traced lines.
5. Remove the paper backing, then fuse the appliqué pieces to your base fabric, again using a damp tea towel on top of the fabrics.
6. You can now stitch your appliqué shape into place for a more permanent fix. You can either work a blanket stitch all round the edge or work small straight stitches which cross from the base fabric to the appliqué shape. Or, experiment with other embroidery stitches such as a running stitch to add decoration and hold the appliqué shape in place.

WHAT IS FUSIBLE WEB?

Fusible web is a man-made fibre that will melt when heated. Basically, it is the fabric version of double-sided sticky tape. When it is placed between two pieces of fabric, the melting action of the web causes it to stick the fabrics together which makes it ideal for appliqué – though you've probably also used a version of it for a quick-fix on trouser hems! To make certain that the fusible web will stick to your fabrics, make sure you wash and dry both the base fabric and the appliqué fabrics before you start.

Fusible web comes with a paper backing on one side which you can draw a shape on. The paper backing protects one sticky side whilst you press the other onto the appliqué fabric. You then remove the paper backing to stick the other to the base fabric. There are several different makes and weights of fusible web so ask

TOP TIP

For a quicker reverse appliqué if your item won't have much wear, you can simply cut along the seam line then stitch the two fabrics together using a small running stitch 3mm (1/8in) outside this without turning the fabric edges under. This works best with fabrics that won't fray easily – and the running stitch gives the finished piece decoration too.

fig 1

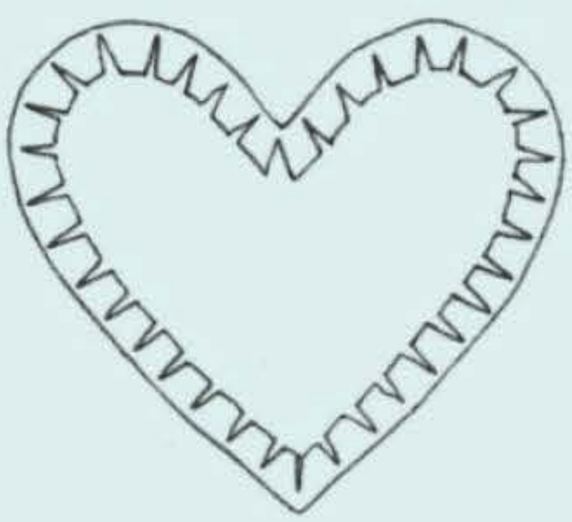


fig 2

your retailer for advice or choose one that has a similar weight to the fabric you are going to be using for the appliqué.

TURNED UNDER EDGE METHOD

For this method you hem the edges of your appliqué shape before you stitch them to the main base fabric. The best product to use for this is freezer paper but you can use any thick paper instead.

1. First trace the appliqué shape onto paper, making sure you leave space between the shapes so there is room to cut them out. For freezer paper, make sure you remember to trace the shape onto the non-shiny side.
2. Cut out the drawn shape, then cut your fabric 6mm (¼in) bigger than the paper shape all the way round.
3. If you are using freezer paper lay it shiny side up on the wrong side of your appliqué fabric.
4. Turn the edges of the fabric over onto the paper and iron them into place, snipping curves and corners as you go if needed. The shiny side of the freezer paper will stick to the fabric. If you are using ordinary paper then just tack them into place (**fig 1**).
5. Continue turning the edges over in this way until you have worked your way all round the shape (**fig 2**).
6. Now turn your shape over to the right side and pin then iron it into place on to your base fabric – the shiny side will hold it in place. Stitch it on using small neat stitches just through the very edge of the turned over appliqué fabric, taking care not to stitch through the paper (**fig 3**).
7. You can remove the paper shape in one of two ways:

Leave one edge unstitched, undo the tacking stitches and pull out the paper. Then turn the edge back under and finish stitching it to your base fabric.

For a more intricate shape, make a small snip in the base fabric behind the centre of the appliquéd shape and remove the paper through this hole. Obviously this will only work if you are then going to put a backing fabric over the back of your base fabric to hide the cut. This works well for complicated appliqué quilts.

WHAT IS FREEZER PAPER?

Freezer paper is an American product, and is a paper with a waxy finish on one side. It is generally used to wrap and protect food that will be frozen. However, it has a wonderful secondary use for appliqué as you can cut patterns out of the paper and lightly iron it to fabric. If you lay the shiny side down, and then heat it up with an iron but with no steam it sticks to the surface you have ironed it to. Once you're finished with it, the paper can be easily peeled off and it won't leave any residue on your fabric. It can be bought in the UK from patchwork and quilting fabric suppliers or online.

REVERSE APPLIQUÉ

Reverse appliqué involves layering fabrics, and then cutting away at the top layer to reveal the fabric underneath in unique patterns. It's a really effective technique that produces a wonderful effect.

How to sew reverse appliqué:

1. Take two different coloured or patterned pieces of fabric and cut them into squares or rectangles of the same size.
2. Trace the shape you want to be cut out onto the right side of the top piece of fabric – this will be the cutting line.
3. Now draw another line 3mm (⅛in) outside this cutting line and this will be your stitching line.
4. Cut along the cutting line all the way round using sharp embroidery scissors for this, especially if it is a small and intricate shape. Clip inside curves and notch outside curves just up to the seam line but not actually touching it.

> REVERSE APPLIQUÉ INVOLVES CUTTING AWAY THE TOP LAYER TO REVEAL THE FABRIC UNDERNEATH, PRODUCING A WONDERFUL EFFECT

5. Place the cut top fabric on top of the bottom fabric and pin both layers to hold them in place.
6. Now fold the top fabric edges under and stitch into place. You can use your needle to fold the edges under and stitch as you go. Use small neat stitches (**fig 4**).

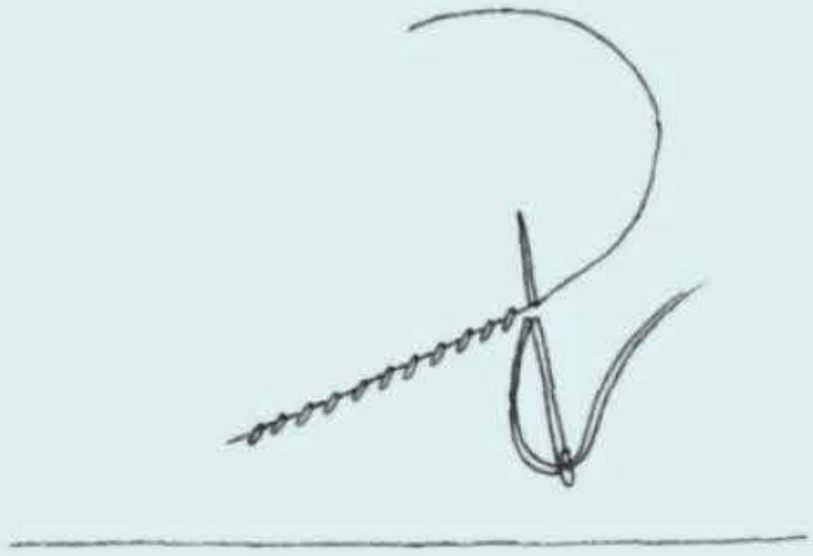


fig 3

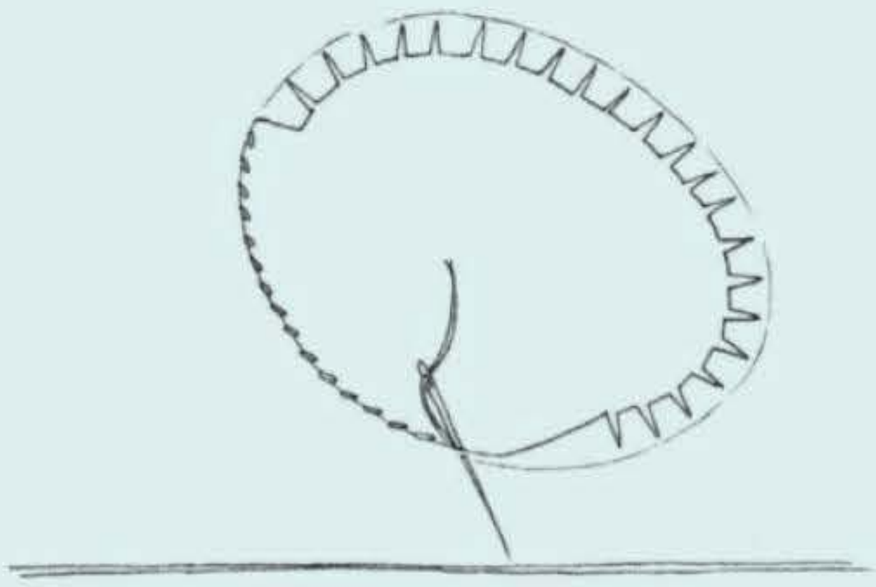


fig 4

Carried Away Tote Bag

Show off your sewing skills and carry your everyday necessities with style.

THIS CHEERY, COLOURFUL bag is the ultimate in pretty practicality, combining a vibrant patterned appliqué with a large, sturdy design that's perfect for carrying around everything you need for the day.

The neutral linen of the bag makes the ideal background for your most colourful prints. This project is perfect for using up precious scraps of your favourite fabrics, too small to craft a whole design with but too pretty to throw away!

With neat tucks to draw in the top of the bag, plus pockets, a contrasting sash and an integrated gusset, this is a stimulating sew for any crafter.

YOU WILL NEED

- 0.6m (⅔yd) of linen
- 0.5m (½yd) of lining fabric
- 1 piece of pocket fabric, 17.8 x 17.8cm (7 x 7in)
- 1 piece of fabric for the belt loops, 4.8 x 25.4cm (1⅞ x 10in)
- 1 piece of fabric for the sash, 5.7 x 122cm (2¼ x 48in)
- 1 piece of fabric for the strap, 10.2 x 78.7cm (4 x 31in)
- Fabric scraps in assorted colours
- Templates (page 74)
- Freezer paper
- Glue stick
- 0.5m (½yd) of medium-weight fusible interfacing
- 1 piece of medium-weight fusible interfacing for the strap, 5.1 x 78.7cm (2 x 31in)

For stockist details, see page 160

CUTTING OUT

1 Cut out templates A, B, C, D, E, and F and trace them onto the dull side of the freezer paper as follows:

A — Trace once.
B — Trace twice, flipping over the template to trace it the second time.
C — Trace twice, flipping over the template to trace it the second time.
D — Trace twice, flipping over the template to trace it the second time.
E — Trace once.
F — Trace once.

2 Cut out the shapes and, with the shiny sides facing the fabric, press the shapes onto the wrong side of the scrap fabrics. Cut out the fabric shapes, allowing an extra 6mm (¼in) of fabric to extend past paper edges.

PREPARE THE APPLIQUÈ SHAPES

3 Apply glue to the outer edges of the freezer paper and the fabric allowance on one of the cut fabric shapes. Start at the tip of the shape and fold over the fabric, adhering it to the freezer paper. Work carefully around the entire shape, clipping at the curves and applying more glue as needed. Repeat this step for all the appliqué pieces (**fig 1**).

PREPARE THE BAG OUTER AND LINING

4 Cut out template G and pin and trace it onto the linen twice. Cut out the shapes. Repeat to pin, trace, and cut out template G pieces from the lining fabric and medium-weight fusible interfacing.
Transfer all markings from the template as follows:

Front linen piece — On the right side, transfer belt loop placements.
Front lining piece — On the wrong side, transfer tuck marks.
Back linen piece — On the right side, transfer belt loop placements.
Back lining piece — On the right side, mark the pocket placement. On the wrong side, transfer tuck marks.
Front and back interfacing pieces — On the nonfusible sides, transfer tuck marks.

5 Fold and crease a vertical centre line on the front linen piece. Fold and crease the bottom edge by 1.3cm (½in) above the square-shaped cutouts. Fold and crease a line along the bottom belt loop marks, so that you do not appliqué the motif beyond that line. Pin the appliquéd pieces to the front linen piece as shown and blind stitch in place, using a sewing needle and thread in matching colours (**fig 2**). ▶

6 Cut a slit into the centre of an appliquéd area from the back side of the linen, taking care not to cut through the appliquéd fabric, and tear the freezer paper out. Repeat for all the appliquéd pieces.

> "PERFECT FOR USING SCRAPS OF FAVOURITE FABRICS, TOO SMALL FOR A WHOLE DESIGN BUT TOO PRETTY TO THROW AWAY"

fig 1

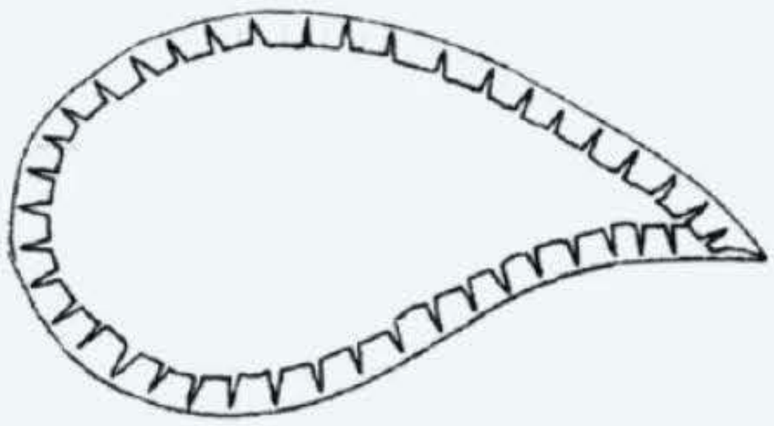
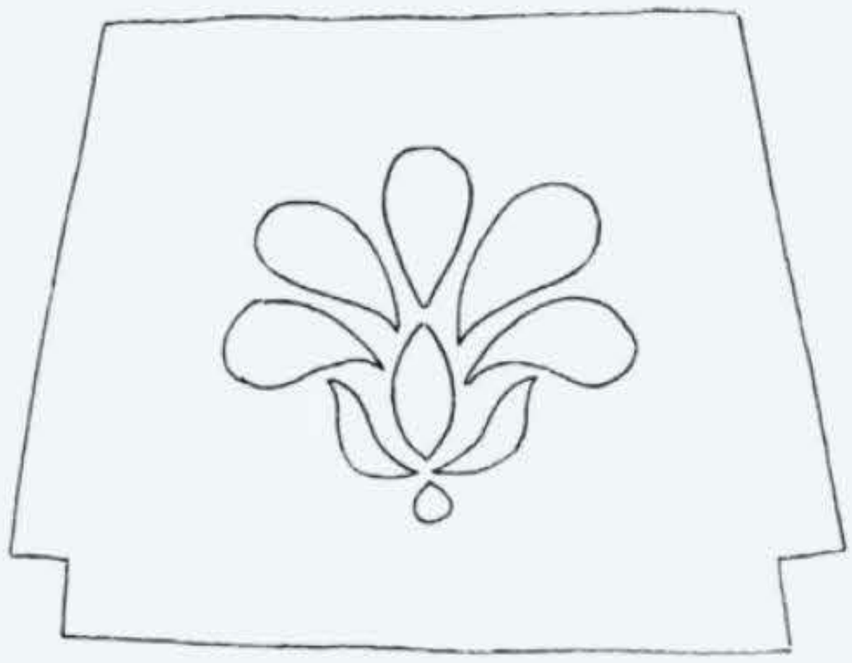


fig 2



> PRESS THE STITCHED SASH FLAT, WHIPSTITCH THE RAW EDGES CLOSED, THEN PLACE IT THROUGH THE BELT LOOPS AND TIE INTO A NEAT BOW AT THE SIDE

STITCH THE BAG

7 Trim down the top edges of the interfacing pieces by 6mm (¼in). Fuse the interfacing to the wrong sides of both the front and back linen pieces.

8 Fold the fused front piece using the dot marks on the interfacing as a guide. Pin and stitch 6mm (¼in) from the fold, starting at the top dot and ending at the bottom dot, and remembering to use backtacks to secure the thread at both ends. Repeat this step to create four tucks, two on each side of the front, and press the tucks toward the centre of the bag (**fig 3**). Repeat the whole of this step to make four tucks on the fused back piece.

9 Pin the front and back linen pieces, right sides together, using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance. Stitch together the side and bottom seams, but do not stitch the cutouts on the bottom edge (**fig 4**).

10 Press open the side seams and the bottom seam. Pressing open the bottom seam is not an easy process but it is necessary, so take your time with it and work carefully and methodically.

11 Flatten the cutouts to make corners and stitch them using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance (**fig 5**).

STITCH THE POCKET AND LINING

12 Press under the top edge of the pocket fabric by 6mm (¼in). Now press the top edge back on itself by 1.9cm (¾in). Stitch down the side edges using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance.

13 Turn the flap up and over, which will cause the side seams to fold in by 1.3cm (½in). Press the bottom edge to the wrong side of the pocket by 1.3cm (½in). Stitch down the top flap (**fig 6**).

14 Pin and stitch the pocket to the back lining piece, following the marks for pocket placement.

15 Repeat step 8 to create tucks for the front and back lining pieces. However, when pressing the tucks, this time press them toward the outer edges to reduce the bulk inside the bag.

16 Pin the lining pieces, right sides together, using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance. Stitch together the side and bottom seams, leaving a 10.2cm (4in) opening and remembering to backtack at both ends of the opening to secure the stitches. Do not stitch the cutouts on the bottom edge. Press open the seams (**fig 7**).

17 Flatten the cutouts to make corners and then stitch them using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance.

fig 3

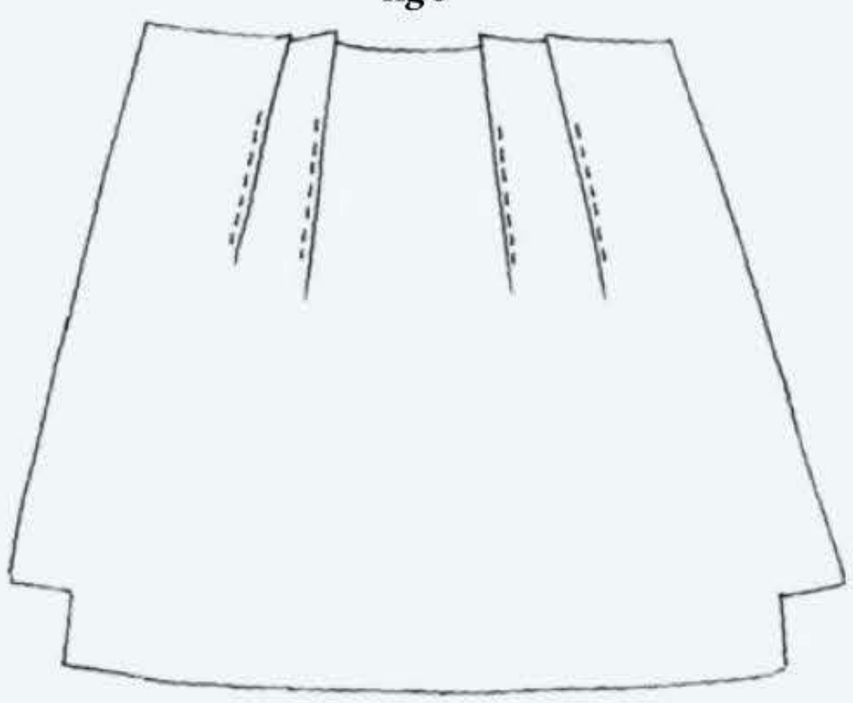


fig 4

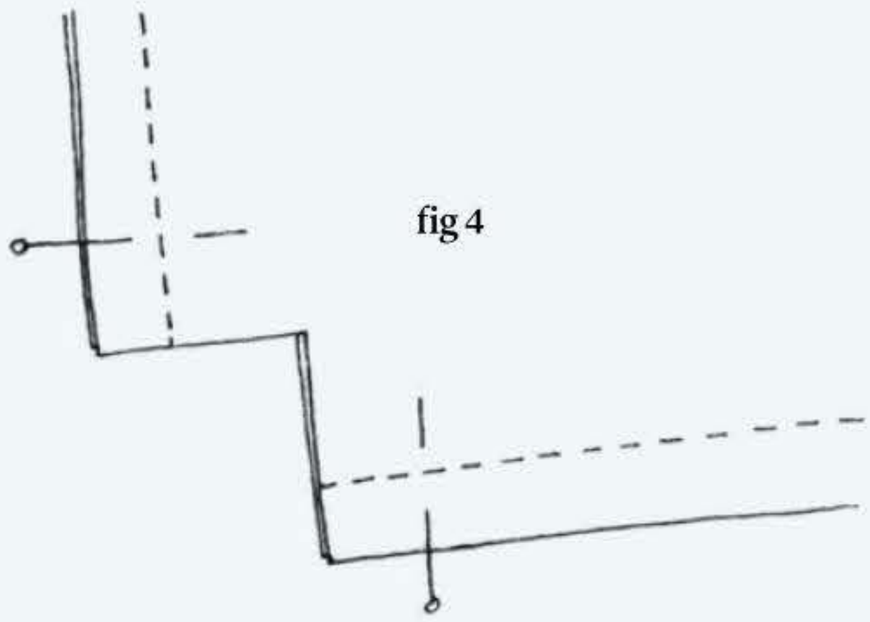


fig 5

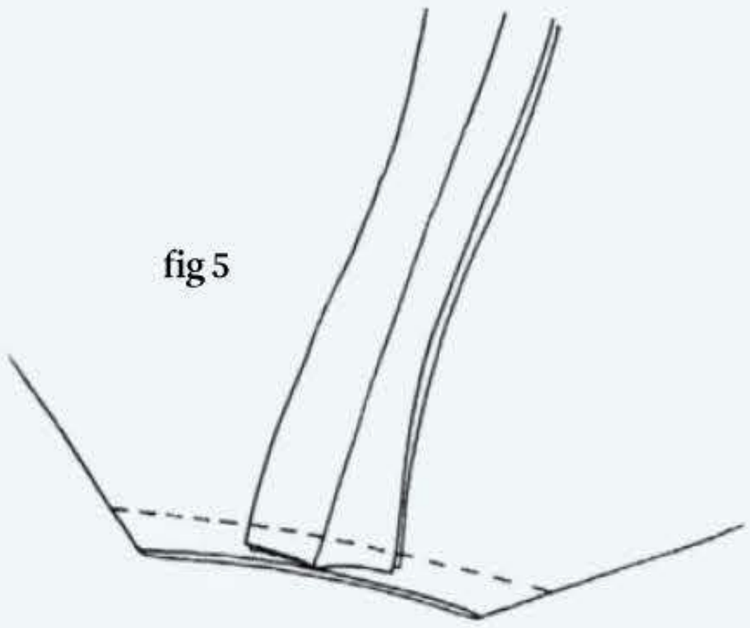
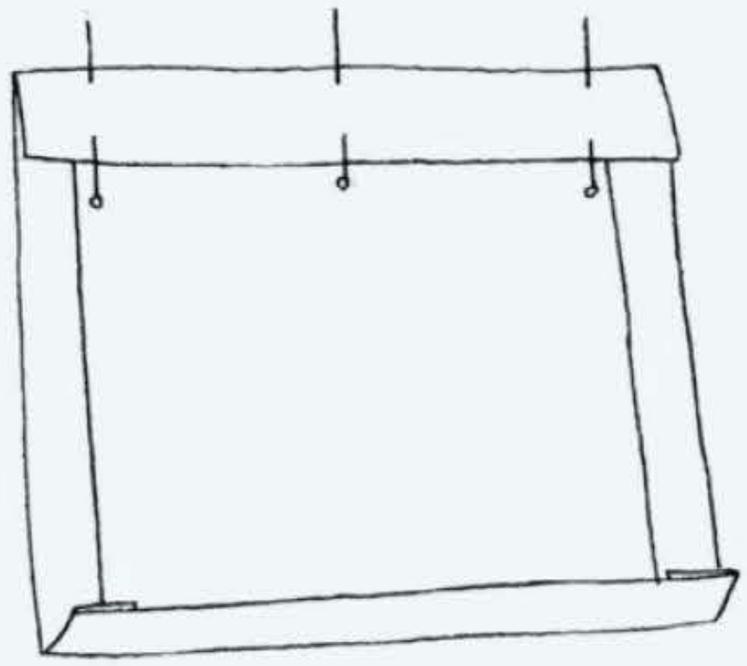


fig 6



ASSEMBLE THE BAG

18 Drop the linen bag into the lining with the right sides of the pieces together and the top edges aligned. Pin the two layers in place, then stitch carefully around the top of the bag using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance (**fig 8**).

19 Turn the bag right side out through the opening at the bottom of the lining, pulling the bag through carefully to make sure that you do not break the stitching.

20 Fold in the edges of the opening and machine-stitch closed. Push the lining down into the bag.

21 Press the top edge of the bag and neatly topstitch 6mm (¼in) from the edge along the entire top of the bag.

FINISH

22 Fold the belt loop fabric in half lengthwise, with right sides together, and stitch using a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance. Use a safety pin to turn the fabric right side out, drawing the tube through itself. Now press the tube flat and cut the strip of fabric into four equal pieces – each should measure 6.4cm (2½in) long (**fig 9**).

23 Turn under both ends of a belt loop piece and match it with a set of belt loop marks on the front of your bag. Pin in place with the loop pointing toward the top of the bag. Carefully stitch the loop in place using a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance. Repeat this step to secure each of the remaining belt loops to the bag (**fig 10**).

24 Fold the sash fabric in half lengthwise, with right sides together, and stitch all along the length using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance. Use a safety pin to turn the fabric right side out, as you did with the belt loop fabric, and press flat. Roll under the raw edges and whipstitch closed. Place the sash through the belt loops and tie into a neat bow at the side.

25 Centre the interfacing for the strap onto the wrong side of the strap fabric and press. Fold the strap fabric in half lengthwise, with right sides together, and stitch using a 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance and leaving a 10.2cm (4in) opening at the centre. Clip the corners, turn right side out, and press. Fold in the edges of the opening and whipstitch closed.

26 Pin the strap to one side of the bag and neatly stitch in place. Repeat to attach the other side of the strap to the opposite side of the bag.

STASH HAPPY APPLIQUÉ

This colourful book is packed with fresh projects that will help you turn your fabric scraps into beautiful appliquéd designs. Written by Cynthia Shaffer, it features 25 designs including a pretty mother and daughter apron set, an adorable gnome doll, a "sweet dreams" tooth pillow, quilted coasters and more. Cynthia's enthusiasm for fresh, creative designs is infectious and her love of fabric shines through every project. *Stash Happy Appliqué* is published by Lark Crafts, £12.99.

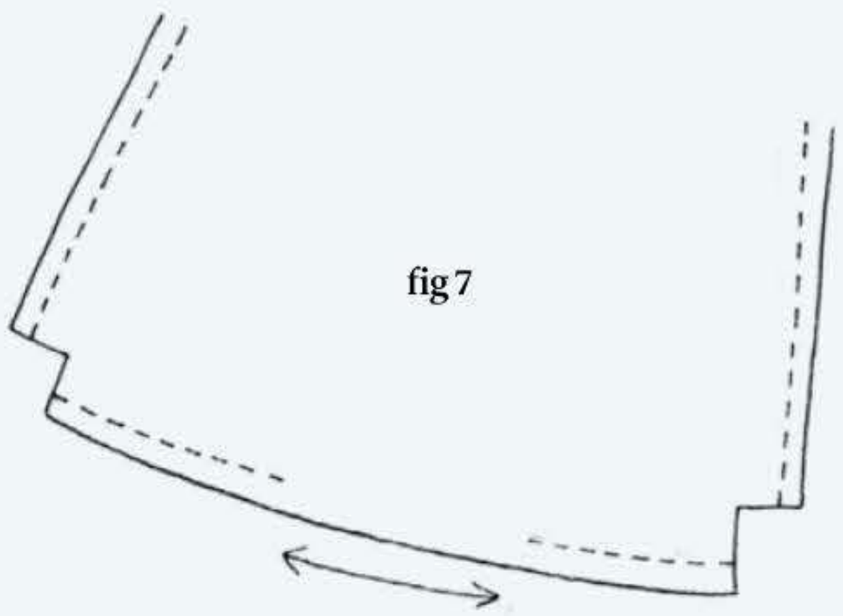


fig 7

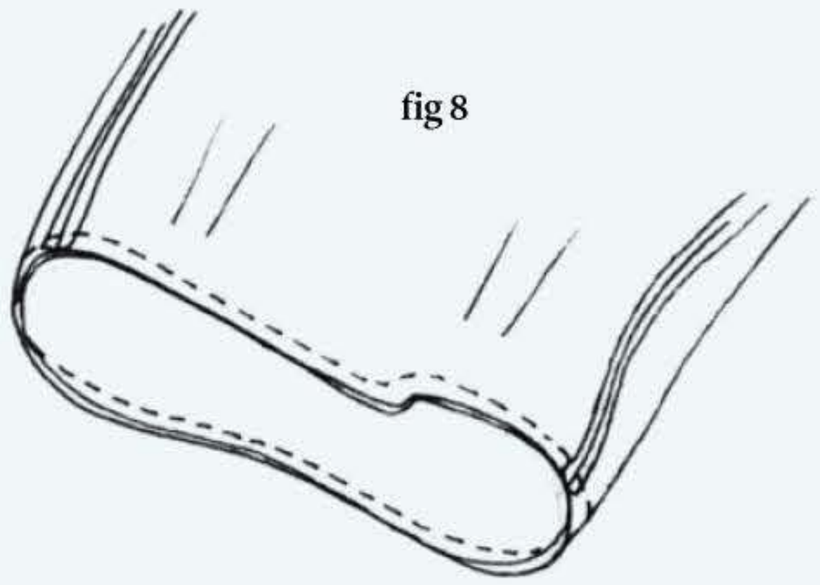


fig 8

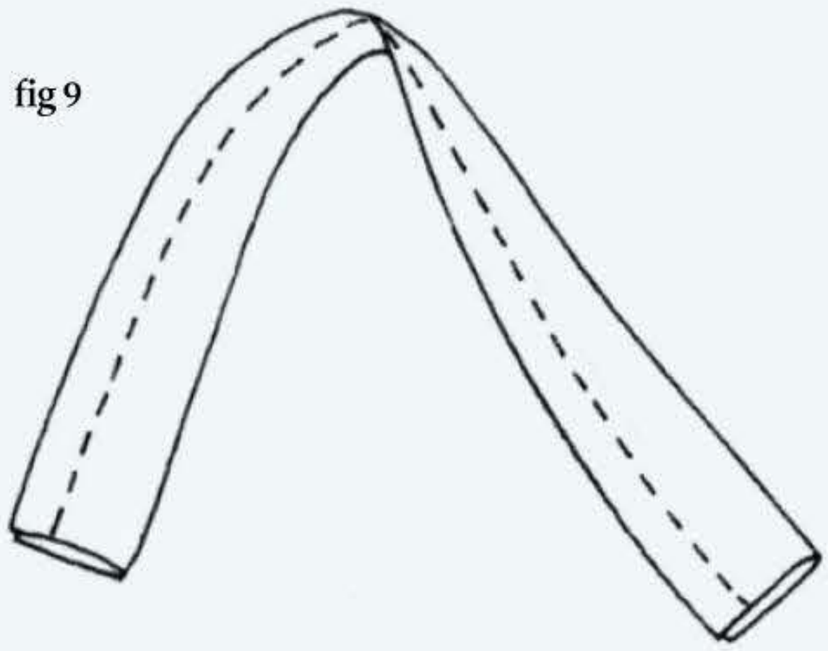
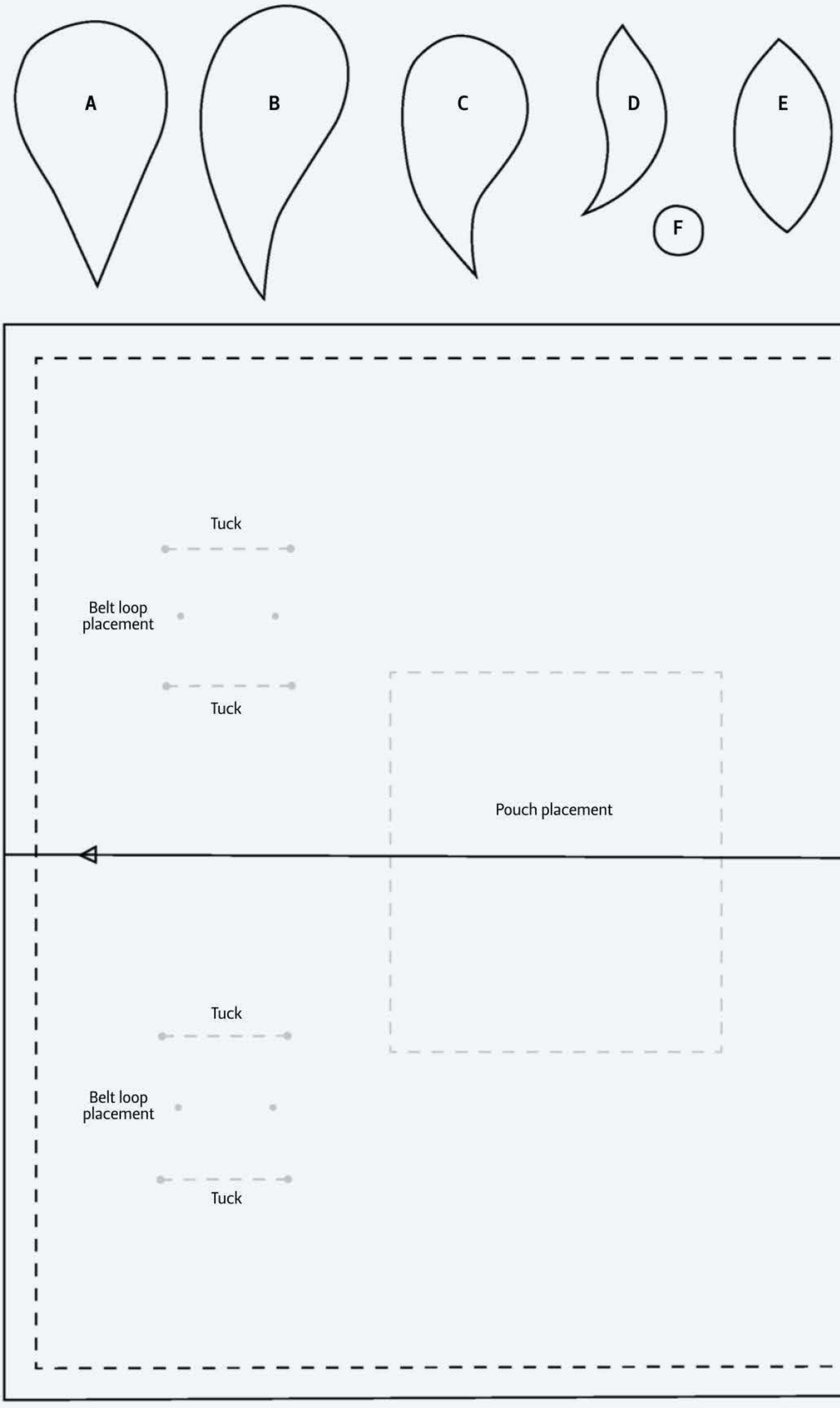


fig 9

fig 10

BAG AND TEARDROPS

Enlarge by 250%



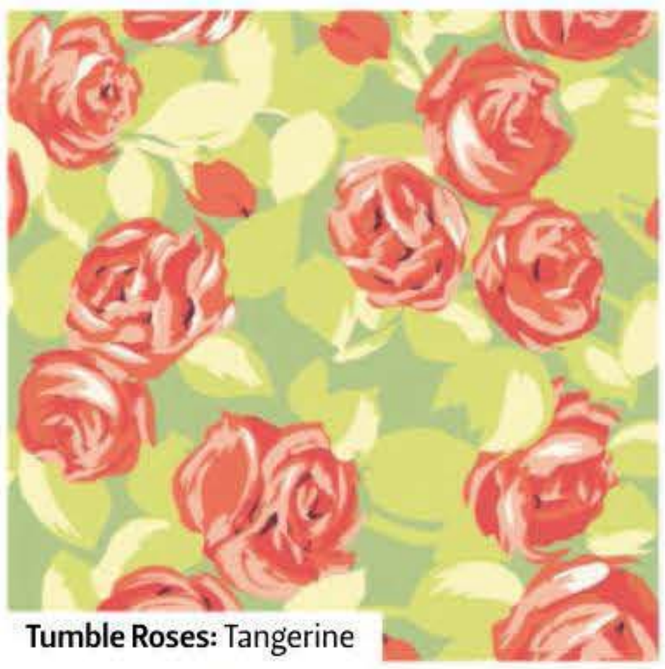
get the look

Modern brights

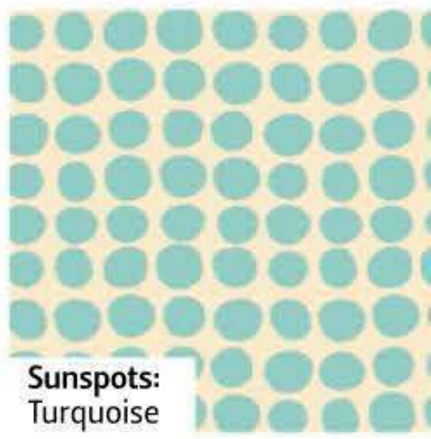
Love by Amy Butler for Rowan is inspired by organic florals and architectural prints.

Water Bouquet: Mint

Bali Gate: Periwinkle



Tumble Roses: Tangerine

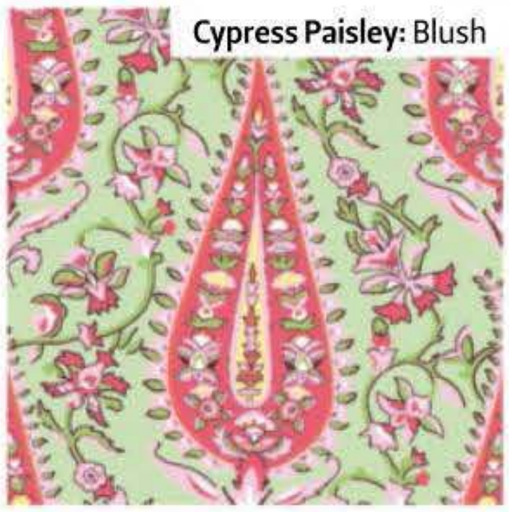


Sunspots: Turquoise

Cypress Paisley: Mint

Arabesque: Ivory

Paradise Garden: Wine



Cypress Paisley: Blush

Sandlewood: Turquoise

Memento: Midnight

Over The Rainbow

Celebrate a new arrival with this rainbow mini quilt that will add a burst of colour to any nursery.

THIS QUILT USES a simple appliqué technique to create a clever design that is perfect for little ones to snuggle under. First you'll need to select the fabrics – have fun finding quirky prints to match each part of the colour scheme. You will need blue for the sky as well as colours ranging from reds, pinks and oranges, through to yellows, greens, and blues for the rainbow strips. A heavyweight natural cotton works well for the backing.

This is a simple design that's just that bit different from standard baby quilts. Its combination of rectangles and curves make it an interesting project to sew.

STEPS

1. Begin with the rainbow strips. Lay them out in the order you want them to appear (from red end to green end). Pin the first two strips right sides together. Set the sewing machine to a medium straight stitch and, taking a 5mm (1/4in) seam allowance, accurately sew the seam down one long edge. Repeat the process with the next pair of strips and continue so you have five double-width strips. Press all the seams flat (**fig 1**).

2. Repeat the process to sew the first double-width strip to the next one, and so on until you have a single, striped piece of fabric. Press all the seams flat again (**fig 2**).

3. Using the templates, cut out the shapes onto paper, so you can draw the clouds and raindrops onto the wrong side of the white fabric. You can now cut around the shapes to form rough squares. Pin the right side of the squares to the fusible side of the interfacing, then machine sew around the drawn lines. Trim the seam allowances and cut small notches around the curves (about 2mm (1/8in) away from the stitching, and spaced about 2cm (3/4in) apart) (**fig 3**). Snip an opening in the middle of the interfacing and turn each piece right side out.

4. Position the clouds and raindrops right sides up on the sky fabric (so the fusible side of the interfacing is against the blue fabric), and iron in place. You may also need to use pins to hold the pieces in place for stitching. Then using white thread, slip stitch around each cloud and raindrop.

5. With right sides together, pin the rainbow to the bottom of the sky. With ▶

YOU WILL NEED

- 80 x 38cm (31 1/2 x 15in) blue fabric for sky
- 10 strips of 50 x 9cm (19 3/4 x 3 1/2in) fabric in various rainbow colours
- Sewing threads to match fabrics
- Air erasable fabric pencil
- 40 x 40cm (15 3/4 x 15 3/4in) white cotton fabric for clouds and raindrops
- 40 x 40cm (15 3/4 x 15 3/4in) fusible interfacing for clouds and raindrops
- 86 x 80cm (33 7/8 x 31 1/2in) heavyweight cotton fabric
- 86 x 80cm (33 7/8 x 31 1/2in) wadding

For stockist details, see page 160

"HAVE FUN FINDING QUIRKY PRINTS THAT MATCH THE COLOURS – BLUE SKY PLUS ALL THE SHADES OF THE RAINBOW"

fig 1

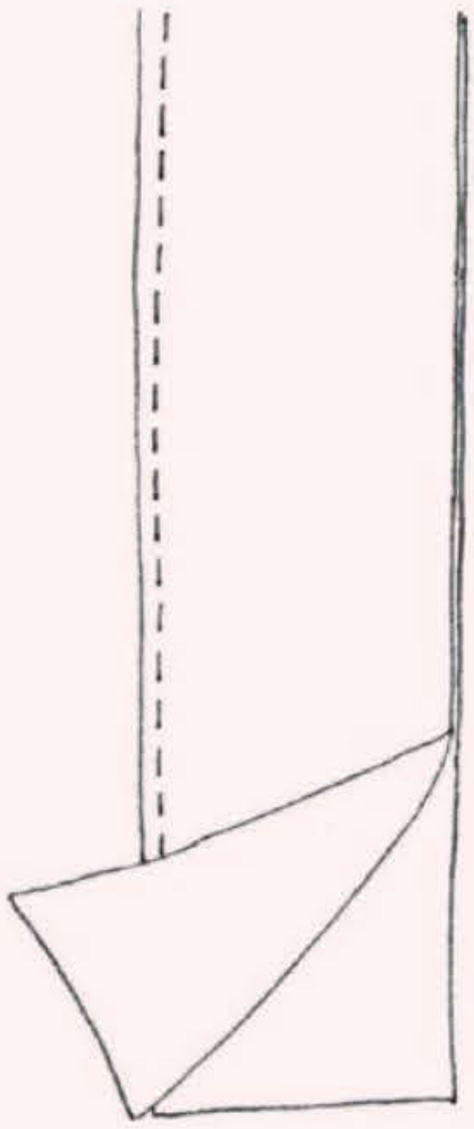


fig 2

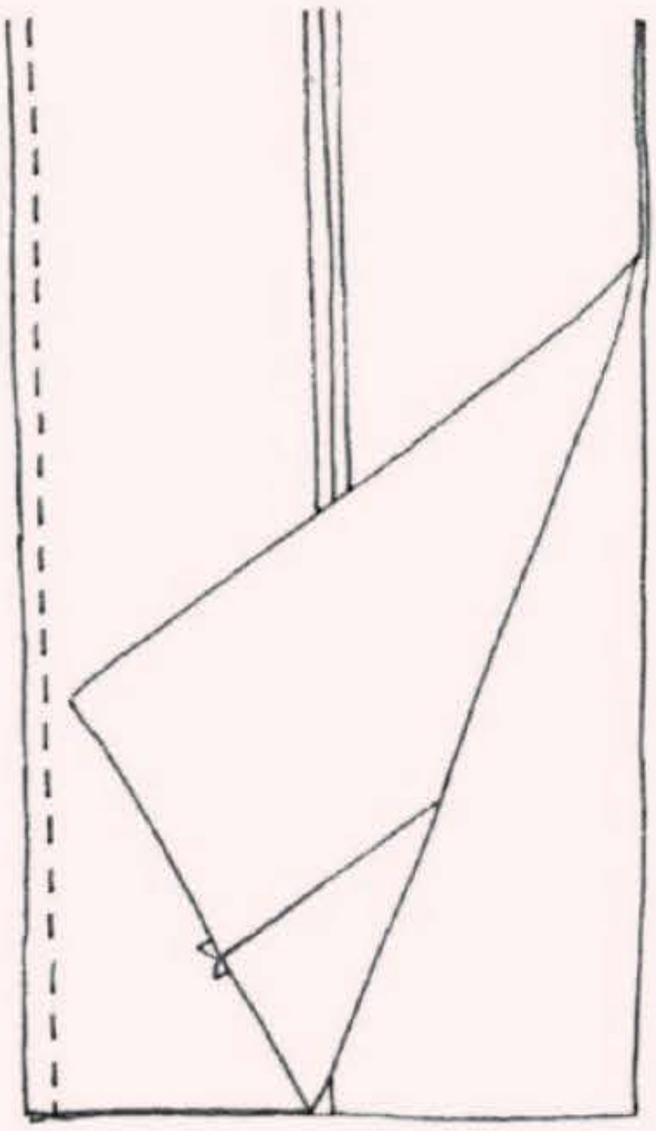
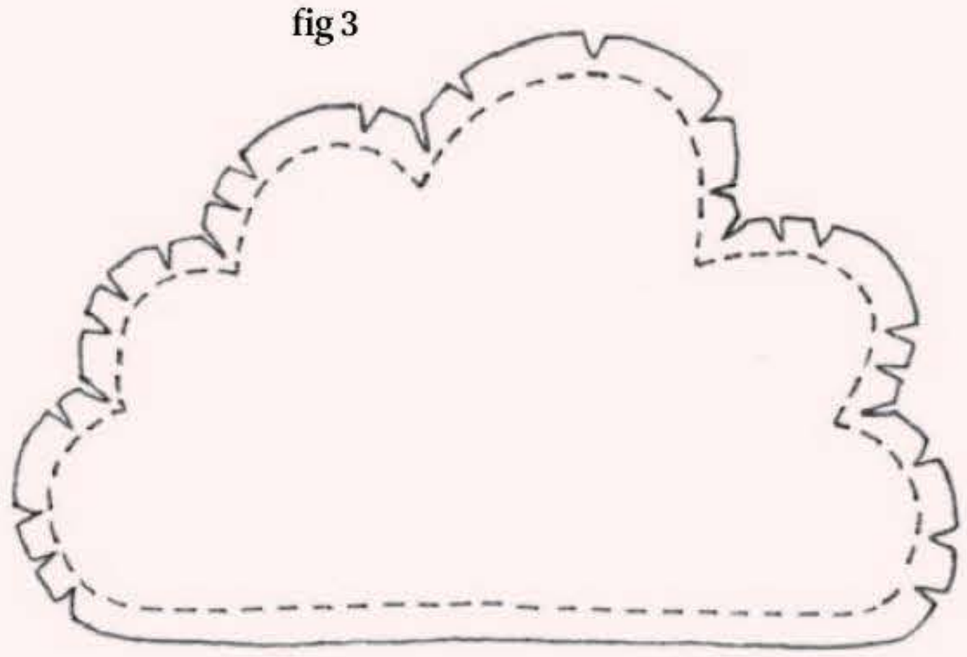


fig 3



> TRY MAKING DIFFERENT-SIZED QUILTS AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE CREATIVE WITH DESIGNS AND COLOUR PALETTES

a 5mm (¼in) seam allowance, sew and press the seam. Lay the front of the quilt on a flat surface with the right side up, pulling it square by sticking tape around the edges (**fig 4**). On top of this, lay the backing of the quilt with the right side down, then lay the wadding on top.

6 Now, using either curved quilting pins (or a curved sewing needle and contrasting thread), pin (or tack long stitches) through all three layers of the fabric. Start in the centre and spiral outward, smoothing out wrinkles and puckers as you go. Then pin around each edge of the quilt.

7 Remove the tape and sew along each edge, taking a 1cm (⅜in) seam allowance and leaving a 15cm (6in) gap for turning through. Remove the pins or tacking stitches. Snip off the corners and trim any unruly edges (**fig 5**) then turn the quilt right side out. Slip stitch the gap closed, and there you have it! Try making different-sized quilts and be creative with designs and colour palettes.

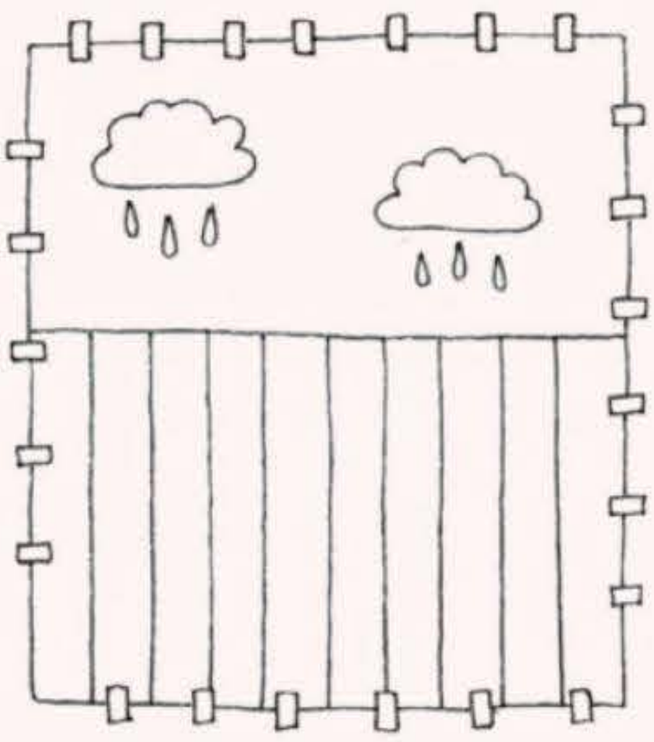


fig 4

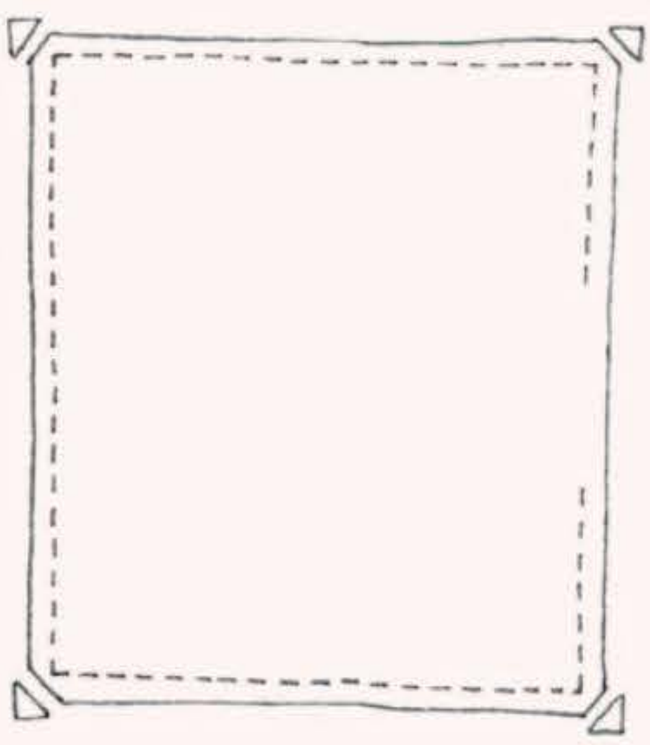
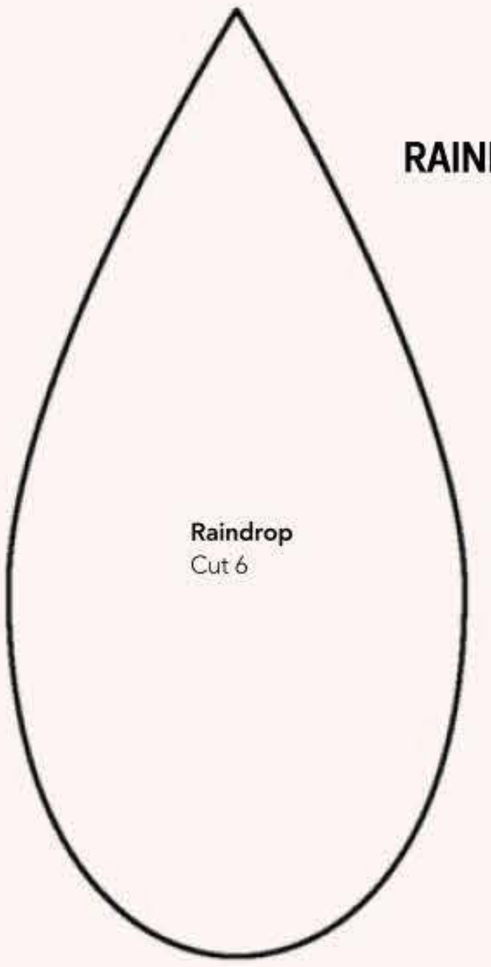


fig 5

OVER THE RAINBOW

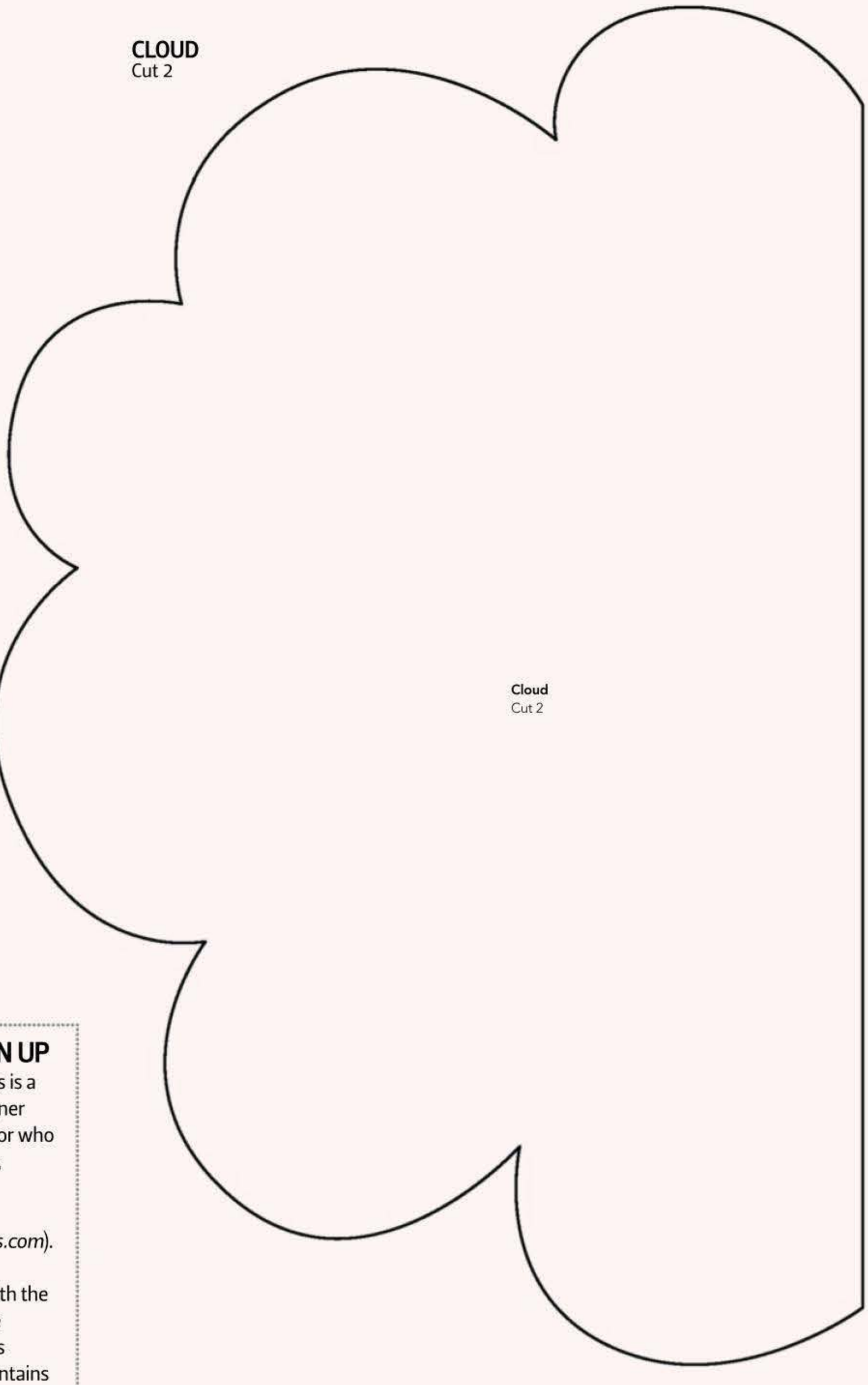
Template is at 100%

RAINDROP
Cut 6

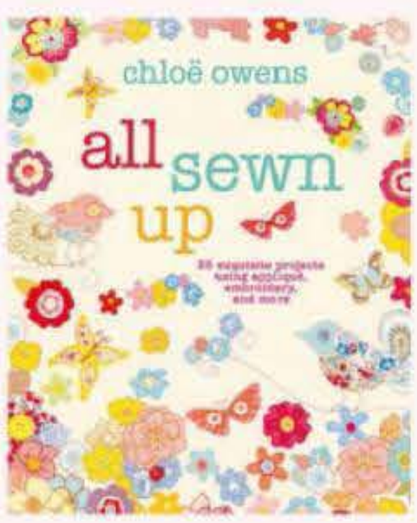


Raindrop
Cut 6

CLOUD
Cut 2



Cloud
Cut 2

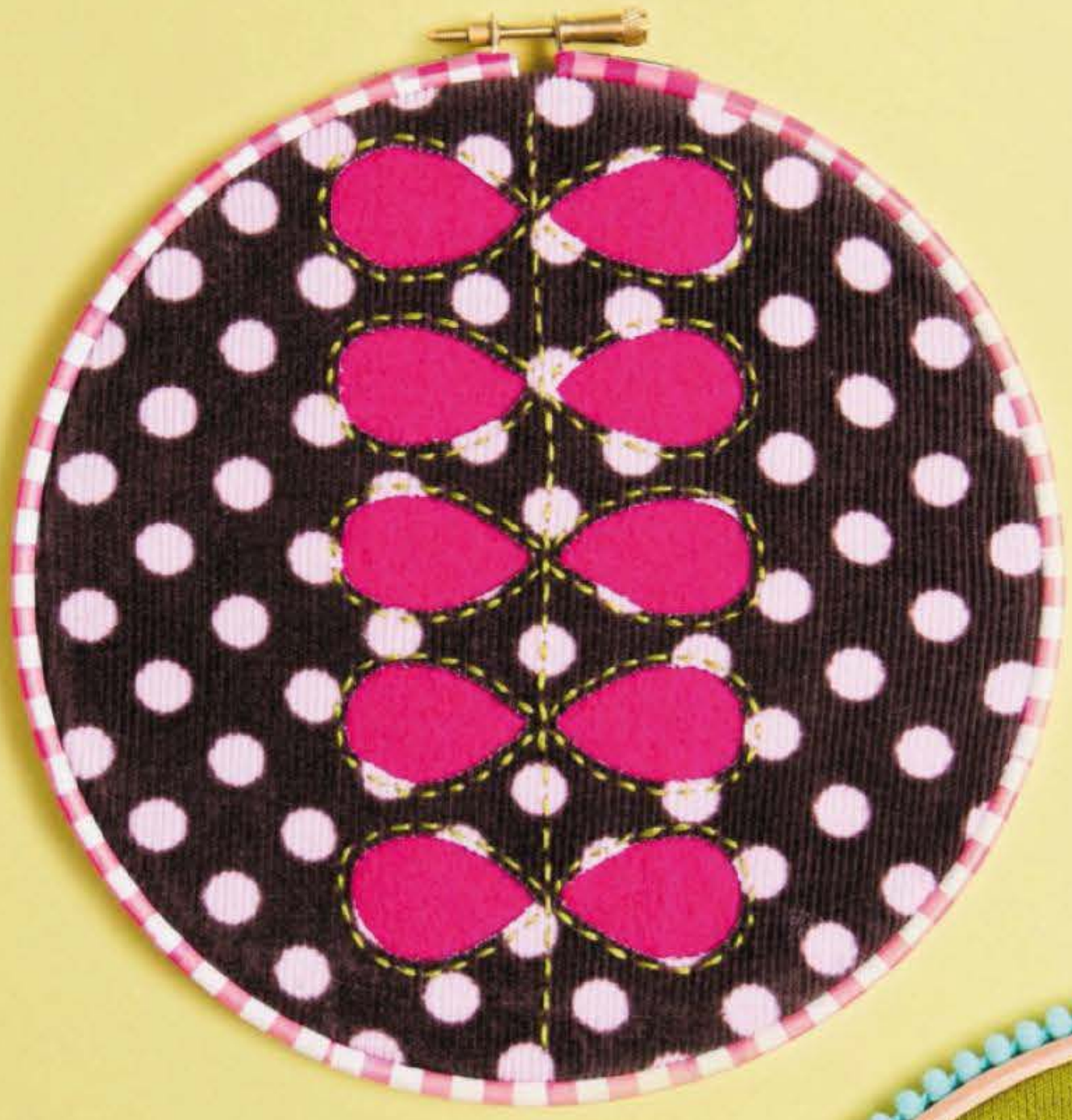


ALL SEWN UP

Chloë Owens is a textile designer and illustrator who loves colour, pattern and appliqué (*chloeowens.com*). She is also obsessed with the '60s and the vintage prints from that era. *All Sewn Up* is published by CICO Books at £14.99 and contains 35 retro-inspired ideas that use beautiful appliqué, embellishments and decorative stitches, with something for every room in the house. *www.cicobooks.co.uk*

Appliqué Hoops

Use a clever reverse appliqué technique to create these stylish fabric artworks.



Photography © F&W Media International, Ltd 2013

USING EMBROIDERY HOOPS as frames is a relatively recent idea that everyone wonders why they didn't think of earlier! And these pretty reverse appliqué designs, paired with embellished hoops, will bring a touch of handmade colour to your walls.

YOU WILL NEED

- Embroidery hoop, 18cm (7in) diameter (one for each design)
- Small pieces of plain and patterned fabrics
- Embroidery thread
- Felt
- Pom-pom ribbon
- Checked washi tape

For stockist details, see page 160

TO CREATE THE SEED HEADS

1 Transfer the template (heads and stalks) onto plain fabric. Cut out all the seed heads, leaving the rest of the fabric intact.

2 Cut a piece of contrasting fabric and place behind one of the cut-out shapes. Make sure it doesn't show behind any of the others. Stitch around the edge of the seed head, sewing through both layers to join the background and contrasting fabrics together. Repeat with the other heads.

3 Sew a double cross stitch at the top of each seed head in a contrasting thread colour. Add a stalk to each seed head, using couching stitches in two different colours to create a stripy effect (**fig 2**).

4 To fix the fabric across your hoop, loosen the screw at the top edge just enough to accommodate the thickness of the fabric. Separate the inner and outer parts of the hoop, place the fabric on top of the inner hoop and then press the outer one down firmly on top. If there's too much resistance, loosen the screw a little more. Once the fabric is in place, you can gently pull at the edges to make any small adjustments. When it's smooth and taut in the hoop, use a screwdriver to re-tighten the screw.

5 For a neat finish, cut out a circle of felt and glue over the back of your hoop to cover all raw edges and knotted threads.

6 Glue pom-pom ribbon around the curve of the hoop.

TO CREATE THE STEMS AND LEAVES

1 Transfer the template onto fabric and cut out the leaves. Place a single, large piece of felt behind the fabric, so it shows through all of the cut-out shapes at once. Sew around the edges of each leaf, stitching through the fabric and felt layers to hold them together (**figs 3 and 4**).

2 Press the washi tape down over the outer edge of the embroidery hoop and then carefully smooth it around the side edges using your fingertips. When you reach the top of the hoop, carefully trim the tape to fit around the metal hardware.

3 Stretch the fabric into the frame as before, and finish with a neat felt backing.

HOOP-LA!

Hoop-La! 100 Things To Do With Embroidery Hoops by Kirsty Neale is published David & Charles, £14.99. From embroidery to appliqué, retro to contemporary, every project is a delight.

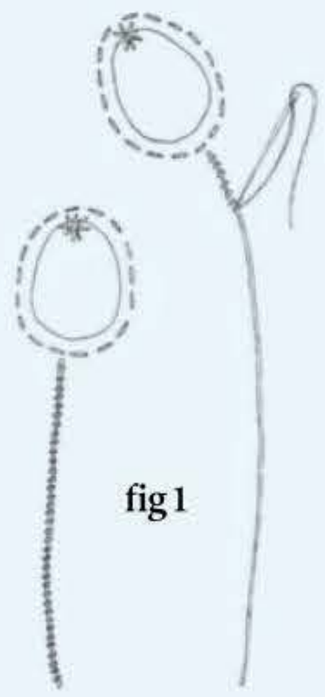


fig 1

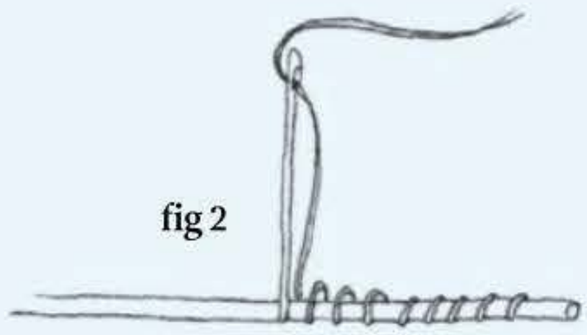


fig 2

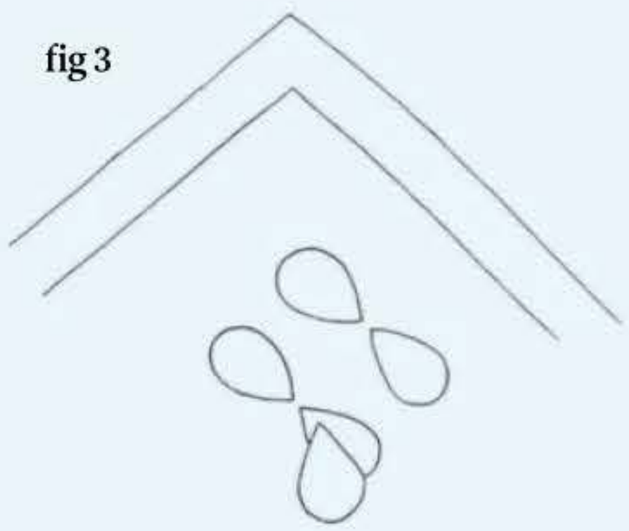


fig 3

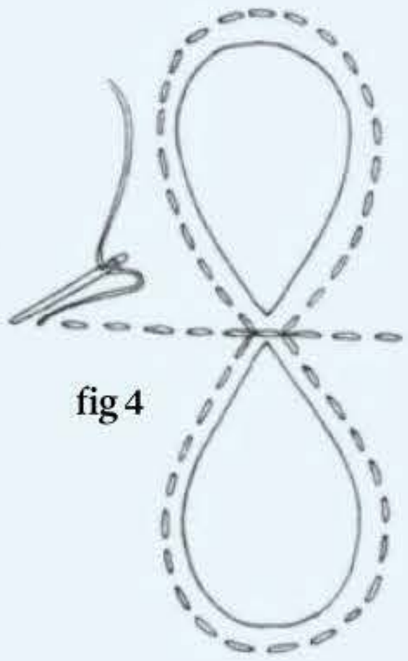
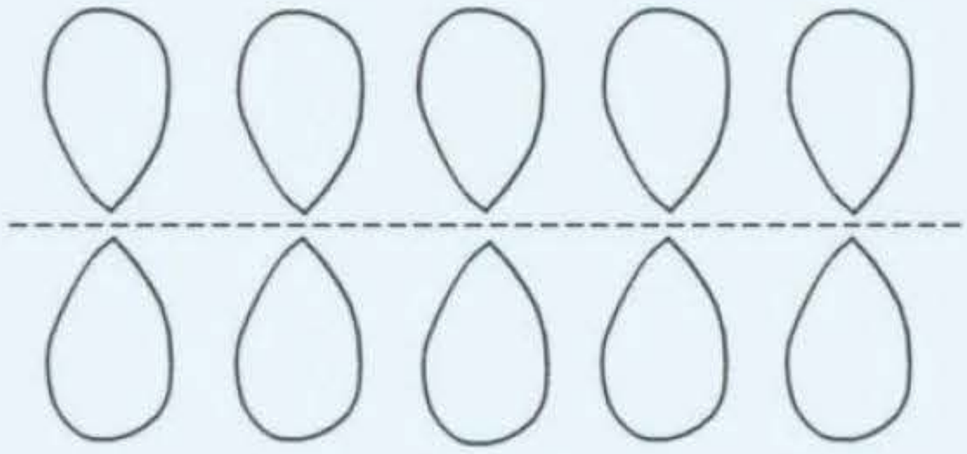
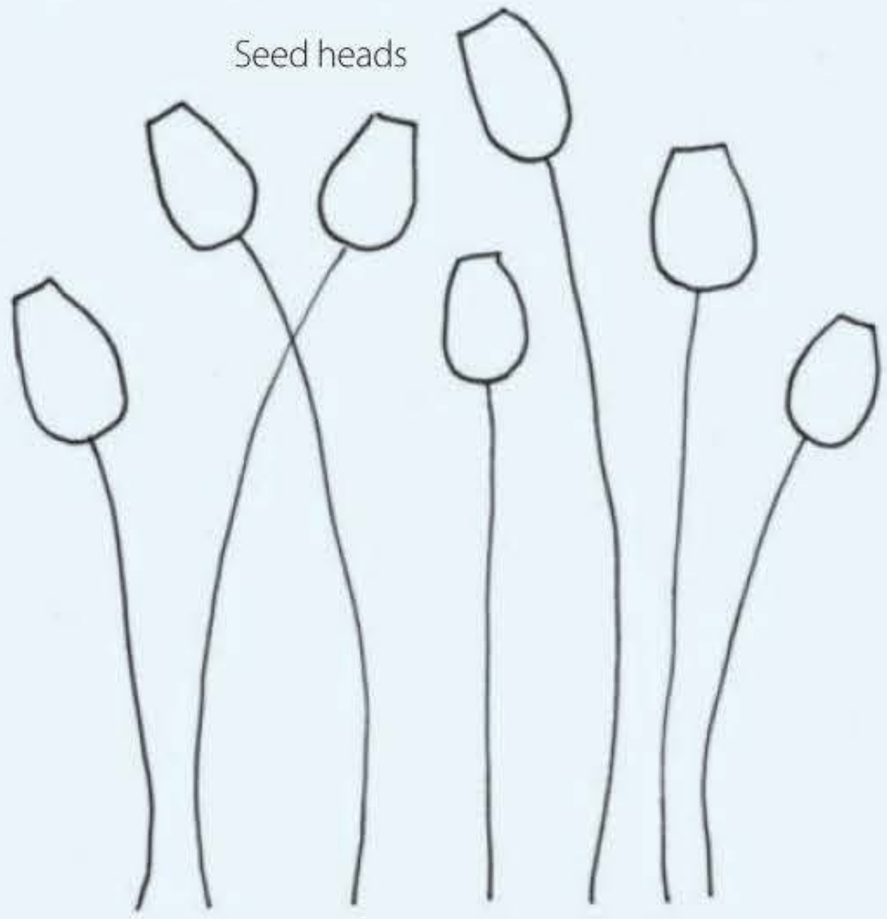


fig 4

APPLIQUÉ HOOPS Enlarge templates by 200%





HAND QUILTING

Create beautiful quilted patchwork by hand with these relaxing and traditional techniques.

Whilst a sewing machine really helps make quilting faster and easier, there's still something very special about something that's sewn and quilted by hand. From sewing together individual pieces to quilting the finished top, sewing by hand is a calming, meditative experience that's also the perfect way to relax in front of the TV.

PATCHWORK

Also known as English Paper Piecing, hand-sewing patchwork is a really portable technique. You can cut up your small patches of fabric then take a stack of them with you to sew up when you have time. They don't take up much space and it's the sort of project that's easy to put down and pick up again without having to remember where you got to!

English Paper Piecing is essentially the process of folding fabric around paper templates, tacking them in place then stitching them together. You then remove the papers, and you're left with beautiful pieces of hand-stitched patchwork.

Starting off:
First decide how big a piece of patchwork you want to make and what shape you want to use. Sketch it out roughly to decide the size of each shape and therefore how many paper pieces you will need. The size of shape you will cut out from your paper piece will be the finished size of the patch once the fabric is tacked round, so that's fairly easy to work out.

Now cut them all out from paper, or print them out if you prefer.

Cutting out the fabric:
The fabric which you will tack round your templates need to be a bit bigger – 6mm (¼in) all the way round is about right. It's best to make a fabric template too by drawing a bigger shape. Cut this from card and use it to draw round your fabric. Alternatively, cut a template from plastic, then stack several layers of fabric and cut them all out together round the template, using a rotary cutter, to save time. You can either plan exactly what colours and patterns you want at the beginning and cut them to suit your placement, or just cut fabrics you like which you think will blend together more randomly.

Tacking the fabric in place:
1. Now you need to tack all the fabric shapes round your paper shapes. Pin the paper template in the centre of the wrong side of the fabric shape (**fig 1**).
2. Fold the fabric edges round the template (**fig 2**). You can pin them into place first or fold the edges and stitch as you go. Secure the fabric in place around the paper by sewing long basting stitches all the way through the fabric and the template (**figs 3 and 4**).
3. Press well on the right side of the fabric, using a little starch spray if desired.

Note: Once you are familiar with the technique, try stitching through the

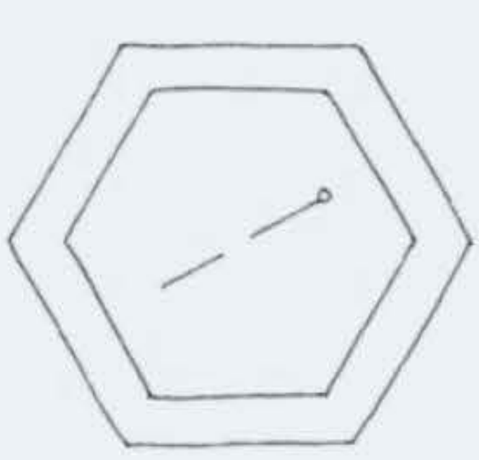


fig 1

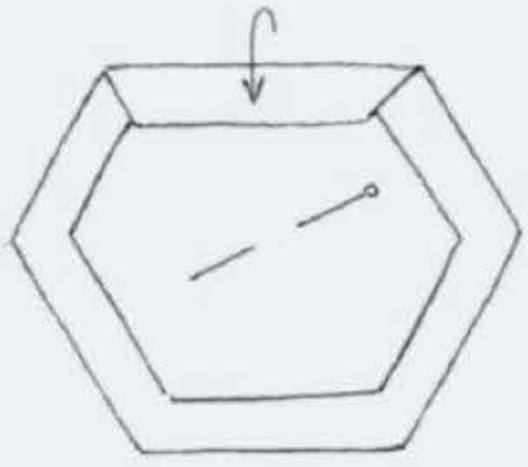


fig 2

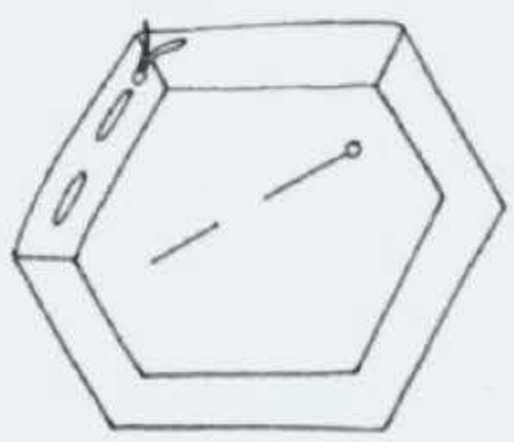


fig 3

fabric only, using a small stitch to secure each folded corner (**fig 5**).

SEWING THE PATCHES TOGETHER

1. Take two of your fabric shapes that will be placed side by side and place them right sides together. Start by stitching two sides together.
2. Stitch through the fabric that runs along the edge of the paper piece, being careful not to sew through the paper itself. Try to make your stitches small so they aren't too visible. The best stitch to use for this is a whip stitch or oversewing.
3. Continue joining all your pieces together in this way working on one seam at a time until it is complete.

WHIP STITCH

1. Start by securing your thread at the edge of the fabric by working three or four tiny stitches on top of each other.
2. Now push your needle through both layers of fabric, coming out at the top layer, then push it down through the bottom layer and angle the needle so it comes out through the top layer again about 3mm (1/8in) from the first stitch (**fig 6**).
3. For the next stitch, push the needle vertically down through the bottom layer and angle the needle again so it comes out diagonally through the top layer.
4. Continue in this way all along the two fabric layers, securing your final stitch in the same way as at the beginning. All your stitches should be parallel and spaced evenly apart (**fig 7**).

> "THERE'S STILL SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT A PROJECT THAT'S SEWN AND QUILTED BY HAND"

FINISHING OFF

Once you have sewn all your patches together you can undo the tacking stitches and remove the papers. Alternatively you can remove papers as you go, once you have sewn round all sides of the shape. This way your work will become more flexible and easier to handle.

Note: If you are using angled shapes like hexagons, you can create a straight edge to finish off a quilt by using part shapes to fill in the missing portions. Just cut out a paper pattern for the part shape you need and tack a piece of fabric round this, then stitch into the gaps at the edges in the usual way.

HAND QUILTING

1. First you need to layer your top fabric (plain or pieced) together with wadding beneath then the backing fabric under that. Tack these three layers together to hold them firmly in place.
2. Cut an 46cm (18in) length of quilting thread and thread it in your needle.
3. Tie a small knot in the end of your thread and pull the needle through from the back of the quilt, bringing it up in the place where you want to begin quilting. Give the thread a slight tug so the knot lies hidden in the wadding.
4. You can now start stitching. Quilting is basically a running stitch worked through all three layers of fabric and wadding. Keep one hand under the quilt and one above. You use your bottom hand to make sure the point of the needle always goes right through to the back and also for stability. Meanwhile, your top hand holds the needle – make several running stitches in and out of all the layers with your needle before pulling the thread through, to make stitching go faster. Hand quilting stitches need to be small and even with evenly spaced gaps between them.
5. Continue stitching in this way working even running stitches along all lines or round all areas you wish to quilt. With practice you will be able to put more stitches on your needle, making this process much quicker.
6. To finish a length of thread, work a few small stitches on top of each at the back of your quilt to secure it.

USING FREEZER PAPER

Freezer paper is ideal for patchwork as you can place the shiny side on the fabric and press it into place – the heat causes the plastic coating to lightly stick to the fabric. It's then easier to tack the fabric round the shape as it won't move.

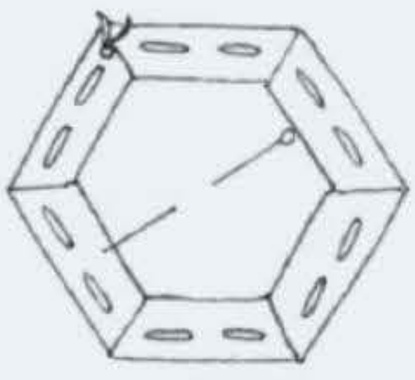


fig 4

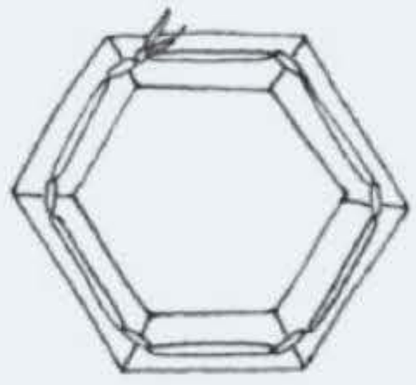


fig 5

fig 6

fig 7

Traditional Cot Quilt

Show off your favourite Liberty fabrics with this beautiful hand-stitched quilt.

TRADITIONAL HEXAGON PATCHWORK has a timeless charm of its own, which makes this 'Grandmother's Flower Garden' quilt the perfect showcase for a selection of classic Liberty Tana Lawns.

Each of the rosettes is made up of two floral prints, chosen to contrast in both colour and scale. The quilt is stitched entirely by hand using the English paper piecing technique, so making it – over many hours – will be a true labour of love, creating a family heirloom that can pass down to your children and grandchildren.

CUTTING OUT

1 Trace the templates onto thin cardboard, then cut around the outlines. Using a sharp pencil, draw around the smaller template to make a stack of backing papers from recycled paper – you need a total of 373 backing papers.

To cut a fabric hexagon, draw around the larger template onto the wrong side of the fabric. Alternatively pin a backing paper to the fabric and cut out a fabric shape 1cm (3/8in) larger than the paper all around. The fabric size doesn't have to be accurate, just big enough to overlap onto the backing paper. Using the cutting template avoids wastage as you can trace the hexagons onto the fabric with the edges abutting.

2 Cut out the fabric hexagons as explained above to make 25 full six-petaled floral-print rosettes and six four-petaled floral-print half rosettes.

From floral hexagon fabric:
Cut a total of 205 hexagons – the easiest way is to cut 26 hexagons from each of the eight prints, for a total of 208 hexagons.

From white hexagon fabric:
Cut 168 white hexagons.

From backing fabric:
Cut backing to same size as quilt wadding, 95 x 137cm (37½ x 54in).

PREPARING THE HEXAGON PATCHES

3 To prepare each patch, hold a backing paper centrally against the wrong side of the fabric, then fold back each edge, fingerpressing as you proceed, and tack down each of the sides one at a time. Stitch right through the paper and make a neat 120˚ angle at each point (**fig 1**).

Each rosette is made up of six matching floral fabric 'petals' sewn around a contrasting centre, so to make the first rosette prepare at least six matching hexagons and one contrasting hexagon. Prepare the remaining sets of patches as you need them.

CONSTRUCT A HEXAGON ROSETTE

4 Place the first of the six matching petals over the contrasting central hexagon, with right sides together. Thread a short, fine needle with matching sewing cotton and knot the end. Slide the needle under the turned-back fabric and bring it through at the top right corner of the first petal.

Overcast stitch the two patches together along the top edge with small, regular stitches. Slip the needle through the folded fabric on both sides as you sew, and make sure you secure the end of the seam with a few extra stitches, worked in the opposite direction (**fig 2**).

5 Open out the two patches and stitch the second petal to the next side of the centre hexagon (**fig 3**). ▶

YOU WILL NEED

- For floral hexagons, 20cm (8in) of Liberty Tana Lawn in 'Capel', 'Douglas Stripe', 'Eloise', 'Fairford', 'Pepper', 'Rania', 'Sarah's Secret Garden' and 'Tatum' – this is a lightweight cotton fabric in eight small-scale and mini floral prints
- For white hexagons, 90 x 112cm (35½ x 44in) lightweight white cotton fabric
- For backing, 140 x 112cm (55 x 44in) lightweight white cotton fabric
- Thick polyester quilt wadding, 95 x 137cm (37½ x 54in)
- Matching sewing thread
- Quilting thread, in white
- Thin, stiff cardboard, for templates
- Recycled paper – such as old envelopes – for the backing papers
- Block of beeswax (optional)
- Safety pins (optional)

FINISHED SIZE
83cm (32¾in) wide by 126.5cm (49¾in) long, to fit a child's cot (see Altering Quilt Size, overleaf)

For stockist details, see page 160

> EACH OF THE PATCHWORK ROSETTES IS MADE UP OF TWO FLORAL PRINTS, CHOSEN TO CONTRAST IN BOTH COLOUR AND SCALE

fig 1

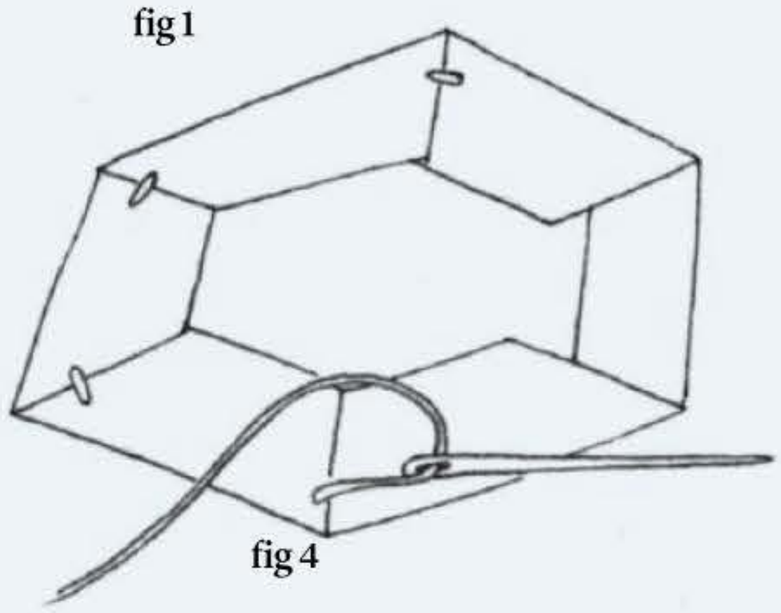


fig 4

fig 2

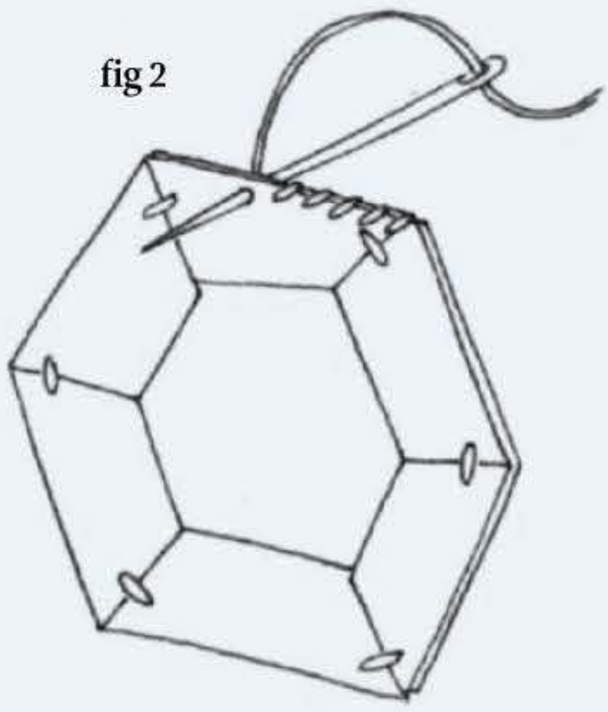
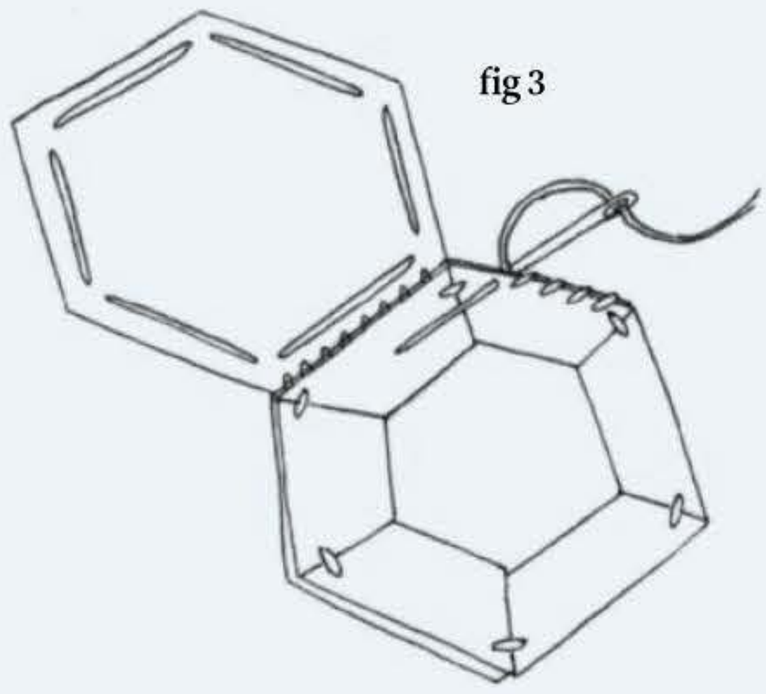


fig 3



The white border around each rosette allows the patterned fabrics to shine.

TOP TIP

You will need to use two different types of sewing needles: a medium length 'sharp' for basting the patches to the templates and a fine, short 'between' in a size 10 or 11 for stitching them together and for hand quilting.

6 Now fold the centre hexagon in half so that the two petals lie face to face. Bring the needle up at the point where all three patches meet and stitch the two petals together (**fig 4**).

7 Sew on the remaining four petals in the same way to make the first rosette (**fig 5**). You need 25 complete rosettes and 6 part rosettes (with four petals) for a quilt the size as the one shown here.

8 When all the rosettes are complete, prepare the 168 white hexagons and set them aside.

PLANNING THE QUILT LAYOUT

9 Arrange the rosettes in seven rows, starting with the top row of four, then alternating lines of three and four until you reach the bottom row of four. Position the part rosettes at each end of the rows of three. When you are satisfied with the balance of pattern and colour, number the back of each rosette, so you can rejoin them in the right order. Then arrange the white background hexagons all around the rosettes. (It's useful to take a photo of the final arrangement.)

10 Sew 12 hexagons around one rosette at the top of the quilt (**fig 6**).

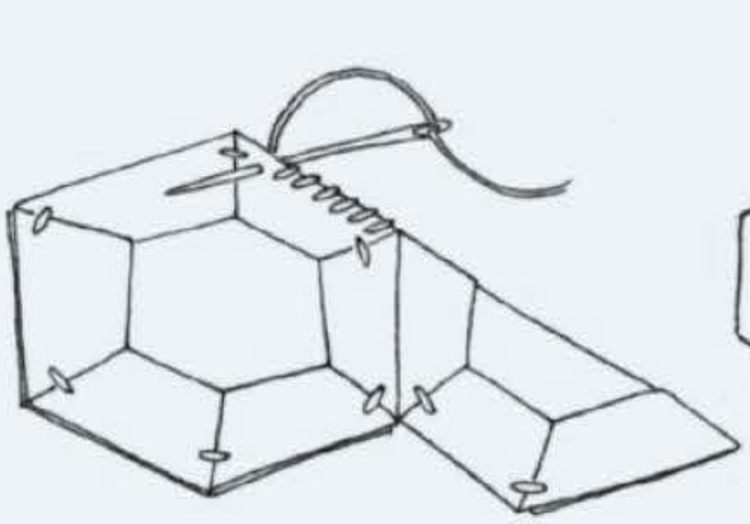


fig 4

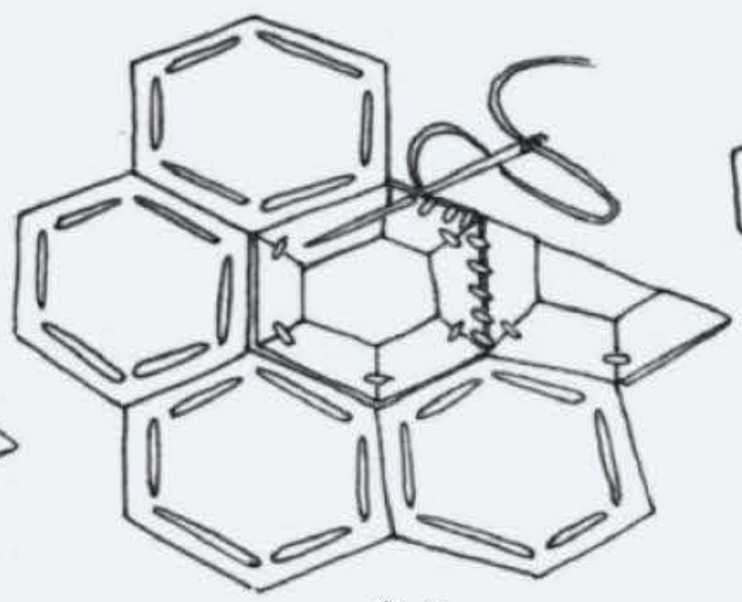


fig 5

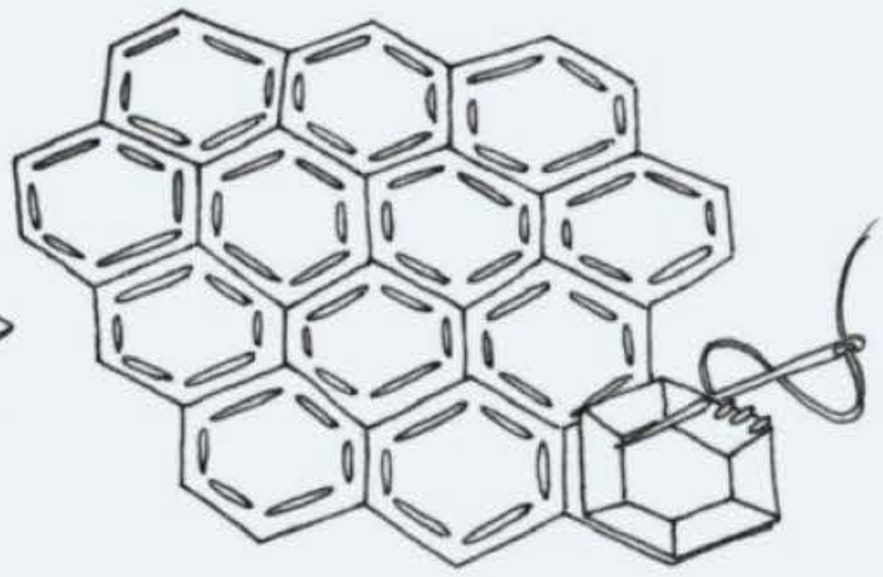


fig 6

ASSEMBLE THE QUILT TOP

11 Add the next rosette bordered with nine white hexagons to the first bordered rosette. You can sew the hexagons together in horizontal rows or diagonal rows (with the corner rosette being sewn to the diagonal row next to it), but start at the top of the quilt. Complete your first row of rosettes, then sew on the rest, a row at a time. This will take a while, but remember that quilt making is a relaxing, unhurried process – take your time and enjoy it.

ASSEMBLE THE QUILT

12 When you have completed the patchwork, unpick the tacking stitches and remove all 373 backing papers. The finished quilt is made up of three layers. Spread out the first layer, which is the cotton backing, right side downwards and place the same-size wadding on top. Position the quilt top, right side upwards, centrally on the wadding. The layers need to be joined temporarily before they are sewn together. You can do this by working a 15cm (6in) grid of tacking stitches across the surface of the quilt, or by the quicker technique of simply pinning them together with small safety pins at regular intervals.

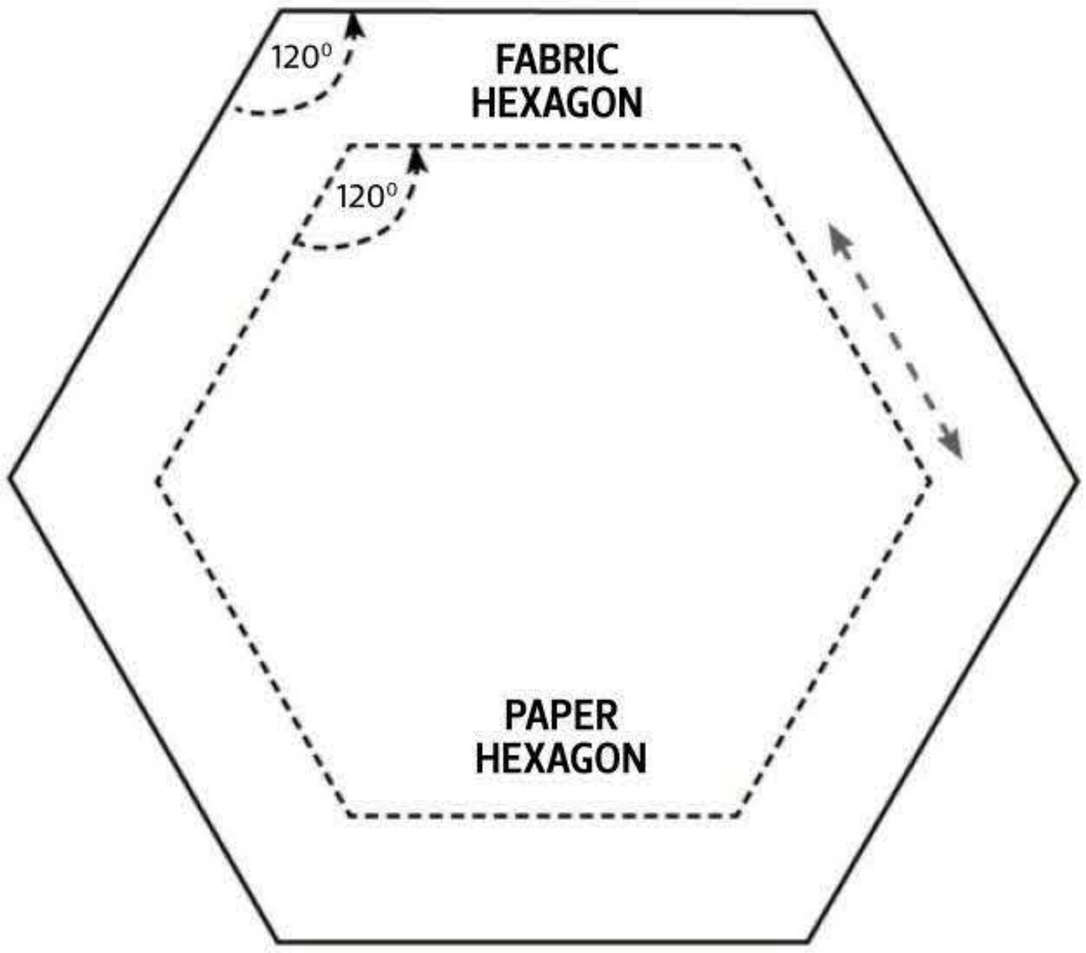
13 Whichever method you use, finish off by sewing or pinning the layers together around the outside edge. Carefully trim back the wadding so that the edge follows the shape of the quilt top and is in line with folded edges of the hexagons.

14 Cut away the surplus backing fabric, following the zig-zag edge of the quilt top, but leaving a 1cm (3/8in) margin all around for the seam allowance. Make a small cut into the backing seam allowance at each inwards "v". Tack the backing to the quilt top as shown, turning the seam allowance inwards as you go, so the two match precisely. Overcast stitch the edges together all the way around the outside.

15 Finally, stitch the three layers together to give texture and depth to the quilt. Using a strong white quilting thread, work a line of small straight stitches around the outline of each rosette, sewing along the seam between the hexagons, "in the ditch". Remove all the safety pins and any remaining tacking.

HEXAGONS

Actual size



ALTERING QUILT SIZE

The instructions are for a quilt for a small child. To make a version for a single, double or even king-sized bed, increase the amount of materials proportionately.

THE LIBERTY BOOK OF HOME SEWING

This sumptuous book (Quadrille, £20) is a treat for any lover of Liberty's classic print fabrics. Filled with projects for the home, each design uses simple, classic lines to best showcase the beautiful fabrics being used. From a Roman blind in Liberty cotton canvas to a stylish tote bag, frilly pinny and more, each of these projects is a pleasure to work and a true treat for the senses. The patterns are designed by Lucinda Ganderton, author of more than 30 popular craft books.

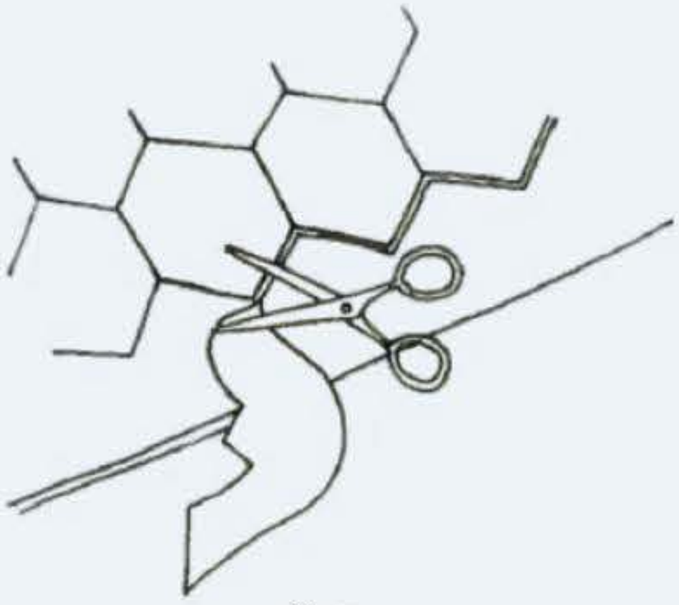


fig 7

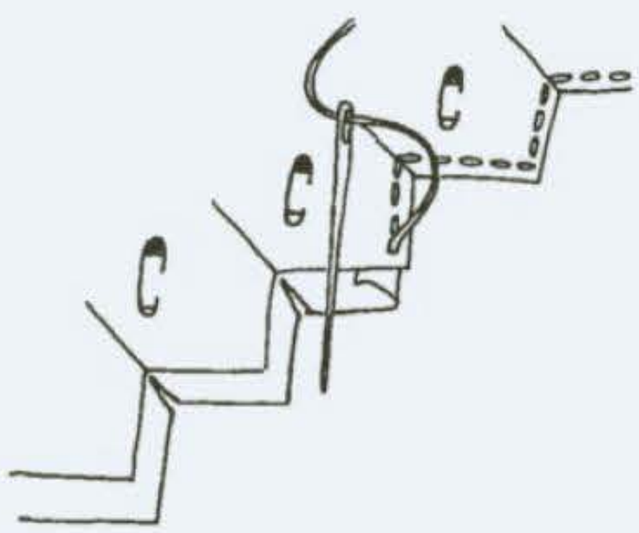


fig 8

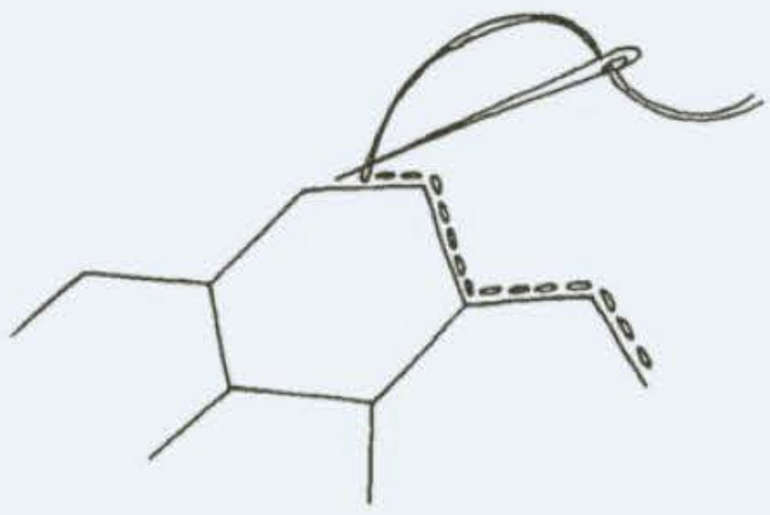
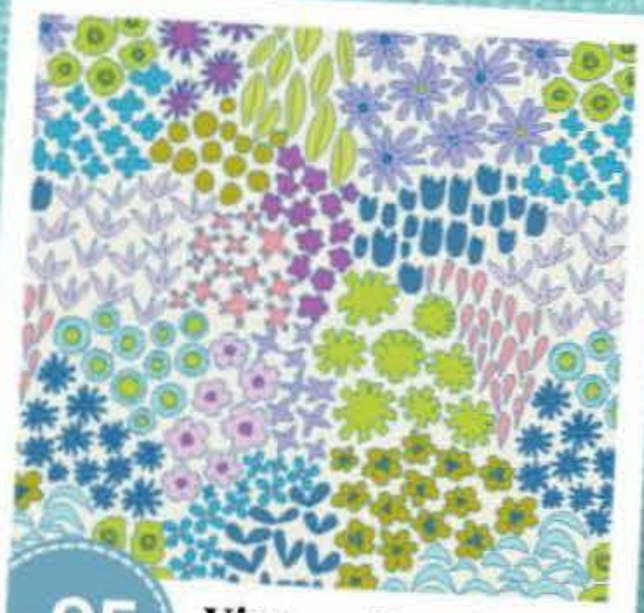


fig 9

Machine Sewing

From quilts to cuddly toys, put your sewing machine to work!

P92 **Bright and Beautiful**
Stunning embroidered lampshade.



P95 **Vintage Pastels**
Colourful retro fabrics.

P100 **Everyday Bag**
Stylish shoulder bag.

P104 **Clasp Purse**
Delicate Victorian lace.

P107 **Fresh & Funky**
Quirky Japanese designs.

P110 **Mail Wall Pocket**
Fun for all the family!

P114 **London's Calling**
Flower power quilt.

P118 **Swinging Sixties**
Groovy fabric prints.

P120 **Big Bold Blocks**
Try log cabin patchwork.

P127 **Dresden Plate Rug**
Classic block with a twist.

P132 **Pink Piggies**
Sew this adorable toy.

P138 **Libby Doll**
Dressed in classic prints.

P144 **Up, Up and Away!**
Colourful stitched mobile.

Expert GUIDE

MACHINE EMBROIDERY

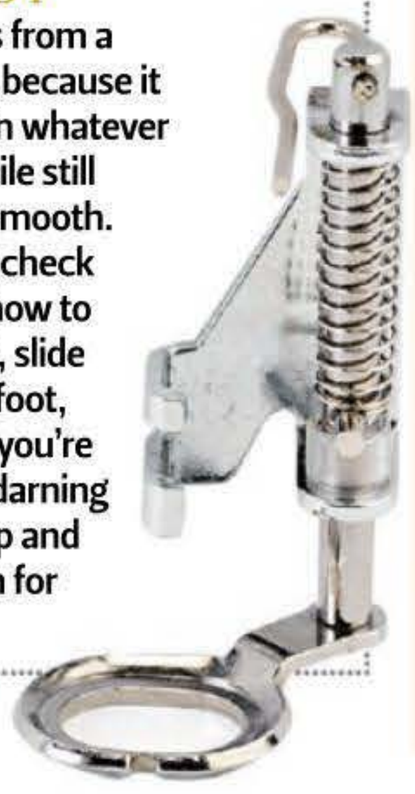
Use your sewing machine to create quick but stylish embroidery projects with a modern feel.

While hand embroidery can be wonderfully relaxing, using your sewing machine to embroider is becoming hugely popular and is brilliantly creative. Machine embroidery involves using your sewing machine in a 'freehand' style rather than working in straight lines, so you have more freedom to 'doodle' with your machine and work the stitches in any direction. The freehand style turns your sewing machine into an artistic tool that you can use to create designs on fabric, often combining it with appliqué motifs.

To work machine embroidery, you don't need much specialist equipment. Aside from fabric and spools of thread, you'll need to have a sewing machine that allows you to lower the feed dogs. This enables your fabric to move freely as you stitch. You'll also need to use an embroidery hoop to keep the fabric taut, and a darning or free-motion foot to attach to your sewing machine, to keep the fabric smooth.

DARNING FOOT

A darning foot differs from a normal presser foot, because it allows you to stitch in whatever direction you like while still keeping your fabric smooth. Each make varies so check the instructions for how to attach it. Once fitted, slide the fabric under the foot, drop the needle and you're ready to start. Most darning feet can be moved up and down, allowing room for a hoop underneath.



1 Purchase a darning foot, which can often be picked up for less than £10 at your local sewing shop. Consult your sewing machine manual for instructions on how to attach your darning foot before you begin, because all machines are different.

2 Mount your fabric into an embroidery hoop, but in the opposite way to normal, so the inner ring is facing up. On your machine, drop the feed dogs and thread the needle. Lift up your darning foot and place your hoop underneath.

3 Hold the hoop firmly with both hands. Begin sewing, moving the hoop in any direction. Use a piece of scrap fabric to practise making squiggles and shapes. It takes a while to get the hang of it, so don't get discouraged.

4 Once you feel a bit more confident, try stitching some shapes, starting with squares. Then move on to circles, and finally hearts. Practise making double outlines, which create a wonderful sketchy look.

Machine stitches

We show you how to use your sewing machine to work all sorts of machine embroidery stitches, techniques and styles.

GETTING STARTED

Start off by doodling and playing with the different stitches on your sewing machine. Play with straight stitches, in different lengths and colours, then move on to zig–zag stitches in different sizes and types. Then try making scribbles and loops. Just have fun!

MAKE SHAPES

Move on to making basic outlines for various shapes, such as circles, squares, hearts and flowers. Practise making double outlines by going around the shape again – your aim should be to get the shapes tidy but still sketchy.

START SHADING

Once you're confident making outlines, try colouring them in, which is called shading. Move the fabric backwards and forwards to fill the outline with stitches of thread, a bit like satin stitch in hand embroidery.

APPLIQUÉ MOTIFS

Add an extra dimension to your shapes with appliqué. Cut out shaped pieces of fabric and attach with straight stitch or zig–zag stitch outlines, or try stitching over both the appliqué shape and the background fabric.

LAYERED APPLIQUÉ

Put together all the skills you've practised and you can create gorgeous designs like this present – it's layered up with appliqué motifs, outlining, shading and other interesting stitch styles.

> MOVE THE FABRIC AROUND TO FILL THE OUTLINE WITH STITCHES, SIMILAR TO SATIN STITCH IN HAND EMBROIDERY

Bright and Beautiful

Turn an old lampshade into a creative centrepiece using a selection of techniques.

TRANSFORM AN OLD lampshade into a seriously splendid interior accessory with this fun and fulfilling project. You'll need to use a large piece of fabric as the base, and then choose lots of smaller pieces for the appliqué. Don't worry if the colours clash – this is a great project to experiment with different combinations and let your creativity run away with you. It's also perfect for using up scraps of fabrics left over from other projects.

We've provided two templates for the lampshade on page 94, for a bird and a butterfly, but you can add other motifs you've drawn or cut out of patterned fabrics. Why not trace and use your favourite designs from other projects?

1 You'll need to make a template from your lampshade in order to cut out the fabric. To do this, firstly tie some string or yarn securely around the lampshade from the top to the bottom – this will be your starting point (**fig 1**).

2 Next, lay a big piece of paper (brown parcel paper and newspaper both work well) flat and place the lampshade on top, with the wrapped string against one end. Roll the lampshade across the paper, marking the edges of the shade with a pencil as you go (**fig 2**). Stop once your lampshade has rolled back to its starting point (where you tied the string). Add 2.5cm (1in) to the top and bottom edges and one short end. Use this paper as a template to cut out the lampshade base fabric.

3 From various fabrics, cut out flowers, butterflies or paisley patterns you like. Use the butterfly and bird templates on the next page, enlarging them to suit, and cut them out of various fabrics, making best use of print patterns for the breasts, wings and tails. On the background fabric (we used white fabric), use the fabric marker to draw swirls for the branches that the bird will sit on. Place all the pieces on the fabric, layering up flowers, swirls, butterflies and birds. Keep all the decorations at least 2.5cm (1in) in from the edges of the fabric. Lightly glue everything in place (**fig 3**).

4 When the glue is dry, take the length of fabric to your sewing machine and free-machine embroider around all the elements of the design. Try out different embroidery stitches if your machine has them – if not, you could always add some by hand when you're done at the machine. Sew swirls, scribbles, wiggles and different shapes, and add details to the bird and butterfly motifs. Then hand-sew on buttons for the birds' eyes and the flower ▶

YOU WILL NEED

- Round lampshade or lampshade frame
- Fabrics – a big piece to cover the lampshade, and a collection of small pieces for the appliqué design
- String or yarn
- Large piece of paper
- Pencil
- Fabric glue or spray adhesive
- Buttons, sequins or embellishments (optional)

For stockist details, see page 160

TOP TIP

Look around for the best background fabric you can find, and think about the effect you wish to achieve when you choose. The thicker the fabric, the less the light will shine through. If you choose a coloured fabric, the light will be slightly tinted when the lamp is switched on. For this lampshade, we've used a very thin white fabric with a tint of green. The appliquéed fabrics will of course add their own tints to the light.

fig 1

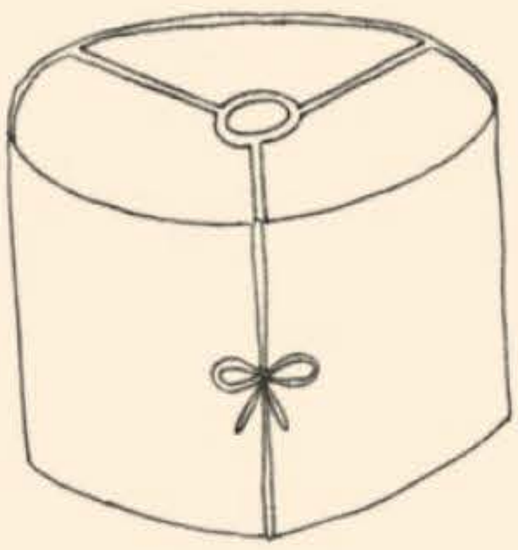


fig 2

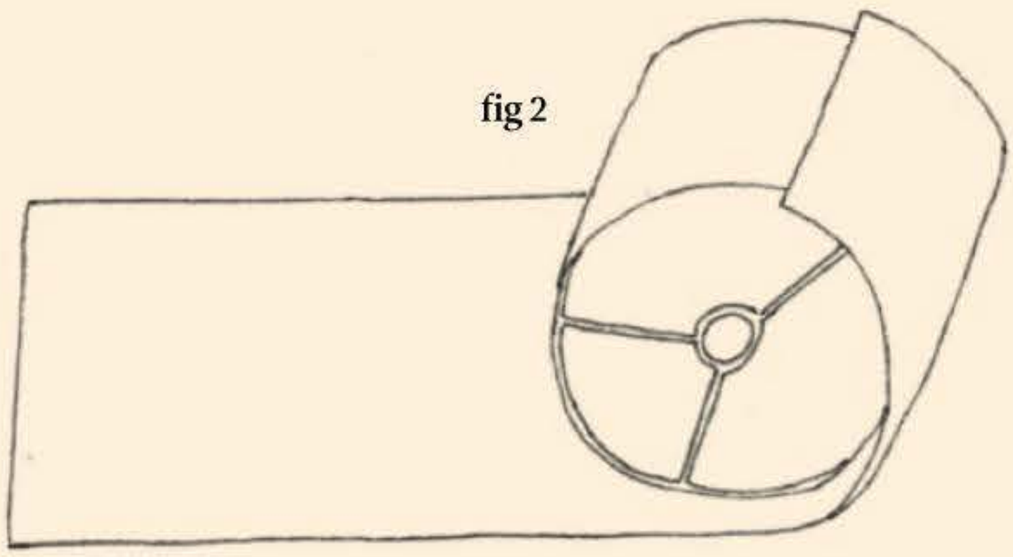
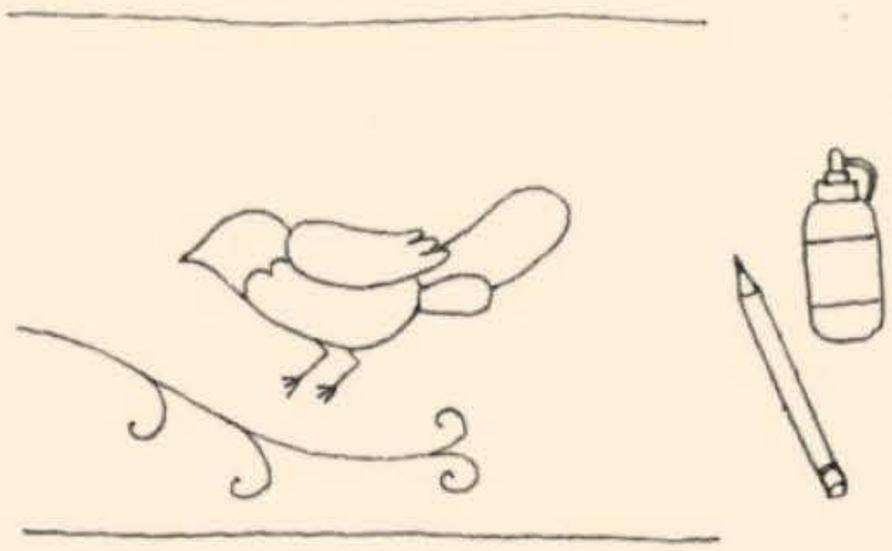


fig 3



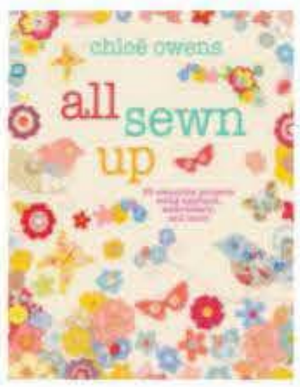
> "THIS IS A GREAT PROJECT TO EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS AND LET YOUR CREATIVITY RUN AWAY WITH YOU"

centres, and add sequins and beads to decorate, if you like.

5 When you're completely happy with all of the embroidery, carefully press under a 1cm (½in) hem along the top and bottom edges and one short edge. Then spray a little adhesive, or spread a little glue, along the vertical seam on the lampshade and stick the raw short edge of the fabric to it, making sure the edge is completely straight and in line with the seam.

Smooth the fabric so that it's nice and flat, then wrap it around the lampshade a short section at a time, sticking it down as you go. Fold the top and bottom edges of the fabric over the edges of the lampshade and glue them down, making sure the fabric doesn't pucker (**fig 4**). Allow all the glue to dry thoroughly before replacing the shade on your lamp.

fig 4

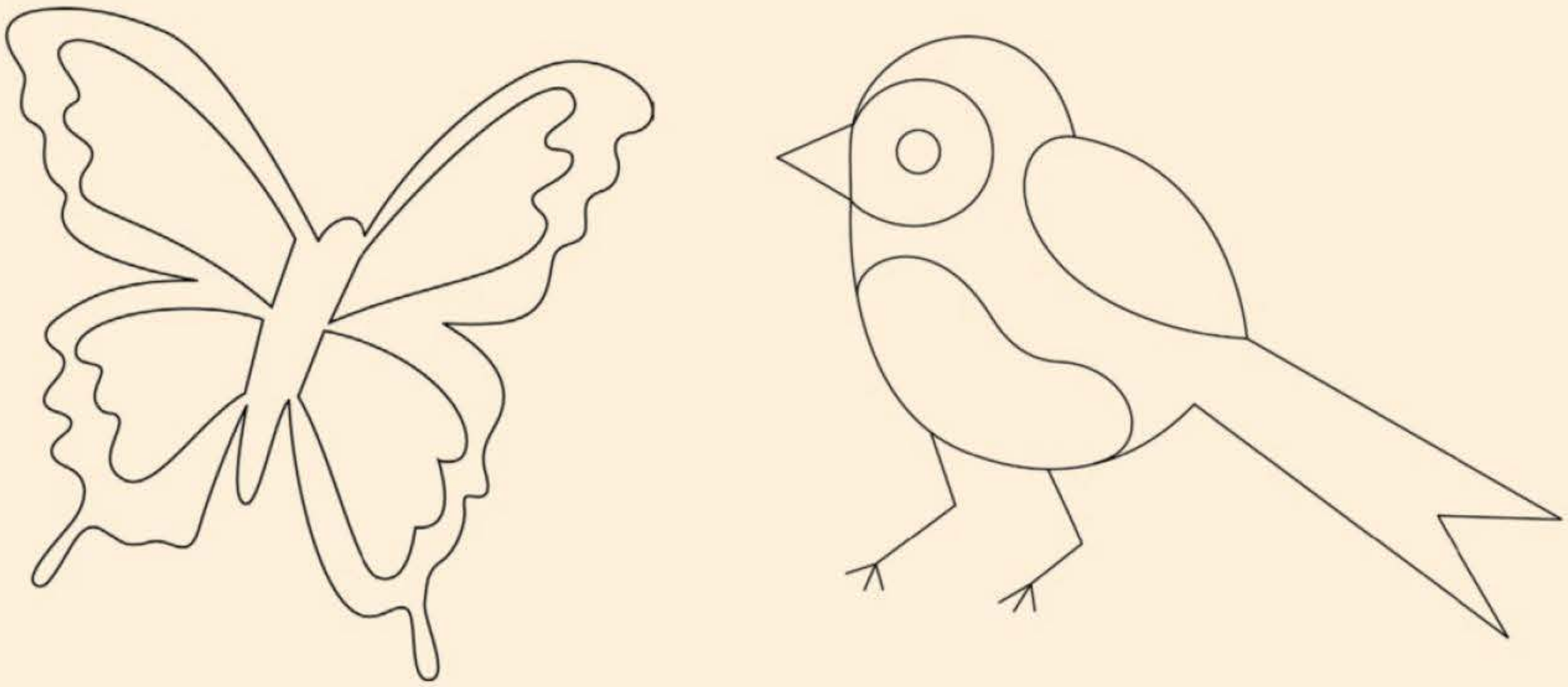


ALL SEWN UP

Indulge your artistic side with this collection of inspiring handcrafted projects. Chloë Owens has created 35 beautiful projects that take the principles of visual arts and replaces pens and pencils with needles and thread. Using appliqué, embroidery and embellishment, this book (CICO Books, £14.99) shows you how to repurpose old fabrics to create colourful, sixties-inspired makes, from a stunning Woodland Critters table runner to fabric flowers, a raincloud brooch and more.

BUTTERFLY AND BIRD

Enlarge/reduce as needed to fit your lampshade



get the look

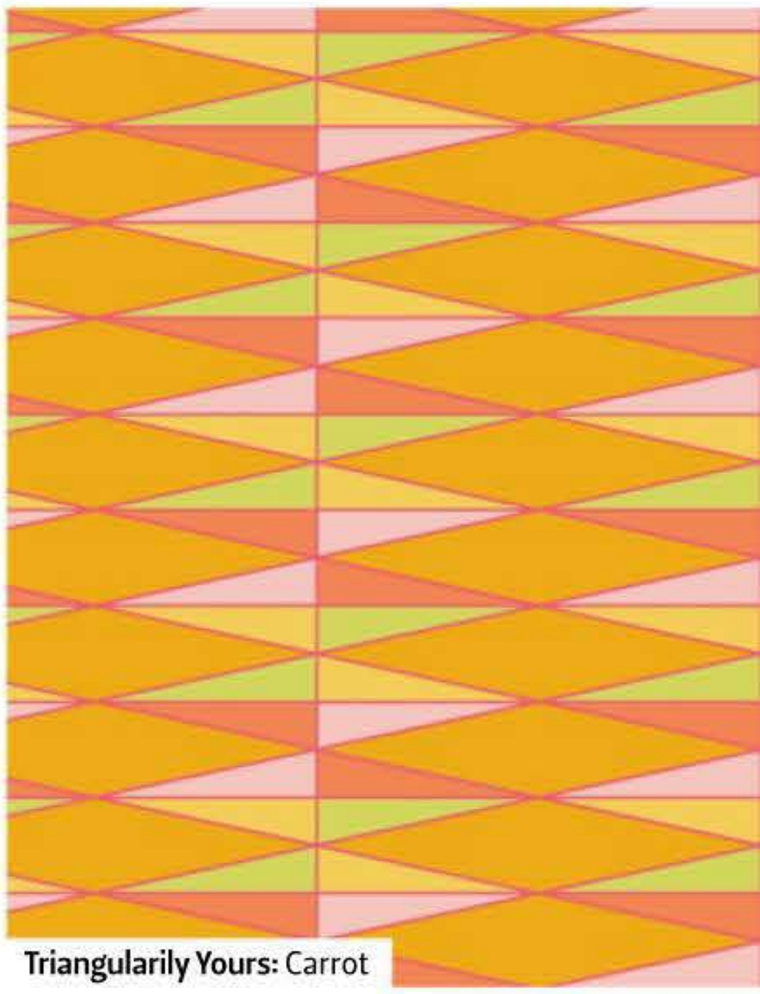
Vintage pastels

Go for delicate retro prints with the Dreamin Vintage range, by Jeni Baker for Art Gallery Fabrics.

Mod Pop: Lavender

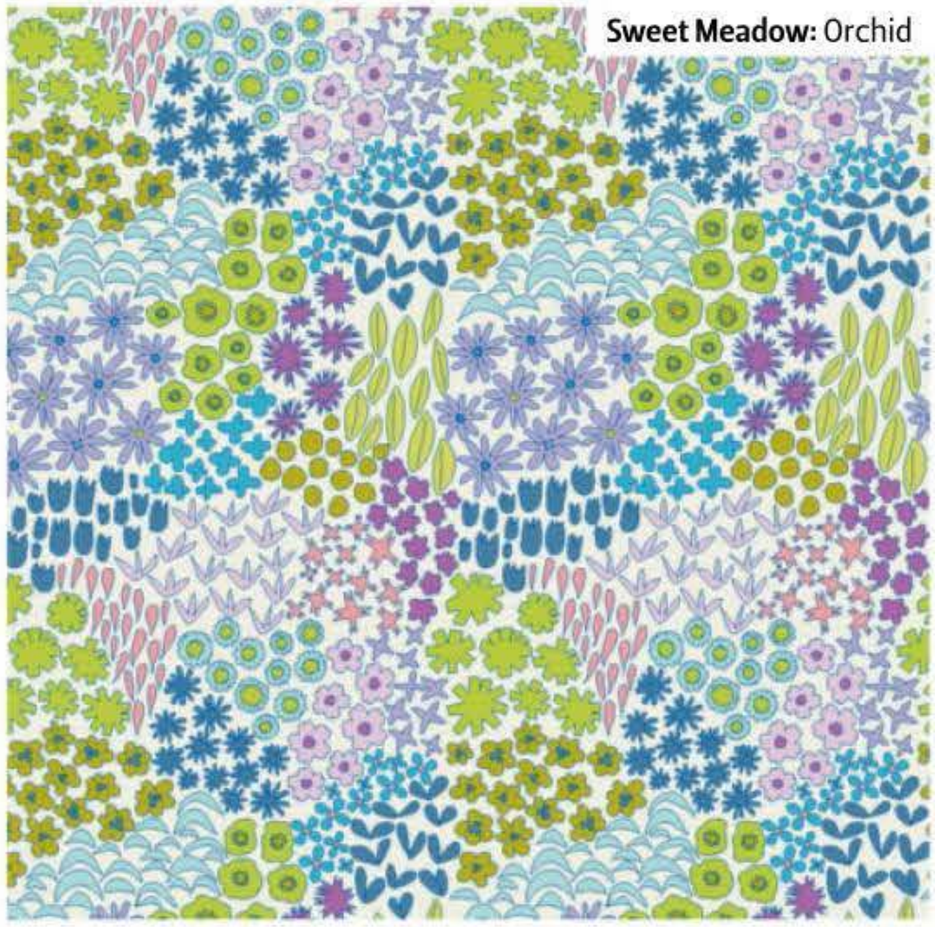
Lazy Daisy: Raspberry

Quite Lovely: Tart



Triangularily Yours: Carrot

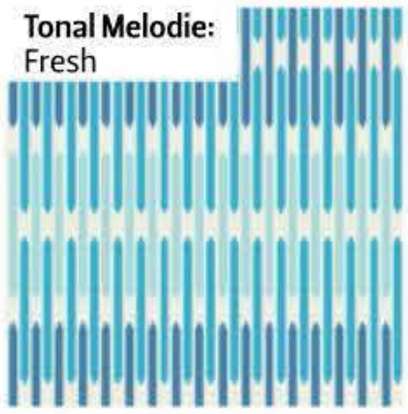
Cottage Treasures: Berry



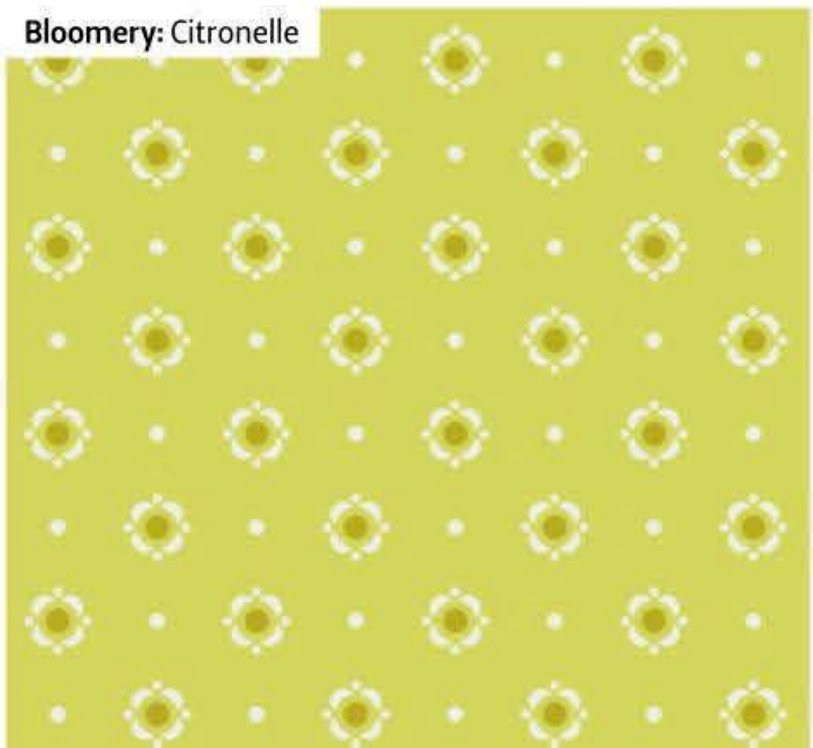
Sweet Meadow: Orchid

Jolly Dots: Lilac

Pretty Poesies: Lime



Tonal Melodie: Fresh



Bloomery: Citronelle

Expert GUIDE

BAG MAKING

We cover the basics of simple bag-making, plus tips and tricks for a professional finish.

Bags come in all shapes and sizes, and once you have mastered the basics of bag making then there are many variations such as closures, fabrics and handles for you to choose from. A plain fabric bag can just have a back, front and handles but adding a gusset to your bag will make it more versatile, giving the bag depth. Lining also adds a practical, yet pretty finishing touch.

Adapt these basic instructions to suit your needs: longer straps make your project into a shoulder bag whilst shorter ones make a book bag. Small bags make great gift bags and larger, squarer ones with deep gussets are ideal for storage. The choice is endless and yours!

MEASURING UP

First you need to decide on the size of your bag. Work out what you want to put in it and whether you want to carry it over your shoulder or just in your hand. The back and front of the bag will be the same size, but the depth of the gusset will determine how much you can put in your bag.

These basic instructions will make a bag which measures 30cm (12in) high and 36cm (14in) wide with a 10cm (4in) deep gusset. The handles are 61cm (24in) long and 2.5cm (1in) wide. This is a good size for an everyday shopping bag.

CUTTING LIST

A 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance on all fabric pieces is included.

Main Bag outer
Front: 33 x 38cm (13 x 15in).
Back: 33 x 38cm (13 x 15in).
Gusset base: 13 x 38cm (5 x 15in).
Gusset Sides: Two pieces 13 x 33cm (5 x 13in).
Handles: Two strips 8 x 63cm (3 x 25in).

BAG LINING

The fabric pieces are exactly the same size as the bag outer but you won't need any handle fabric.

MAKING UP YOUR BAG

Once you have bought and cut out your fabric you are ready to get started. Remember to use a 1.5cm (½in) seam allowance throughout and press all seams open as you go.

JOINING THE BAG OUTER FABRIC

1. Join the gusset pieces along the short edges to make one long piece.
2. Place the gusset strip right sides together down one side of the front of the bag and stitch down the side along the bottom and up the other side (**fig 1**).
3. Attach the back of the bag to the other

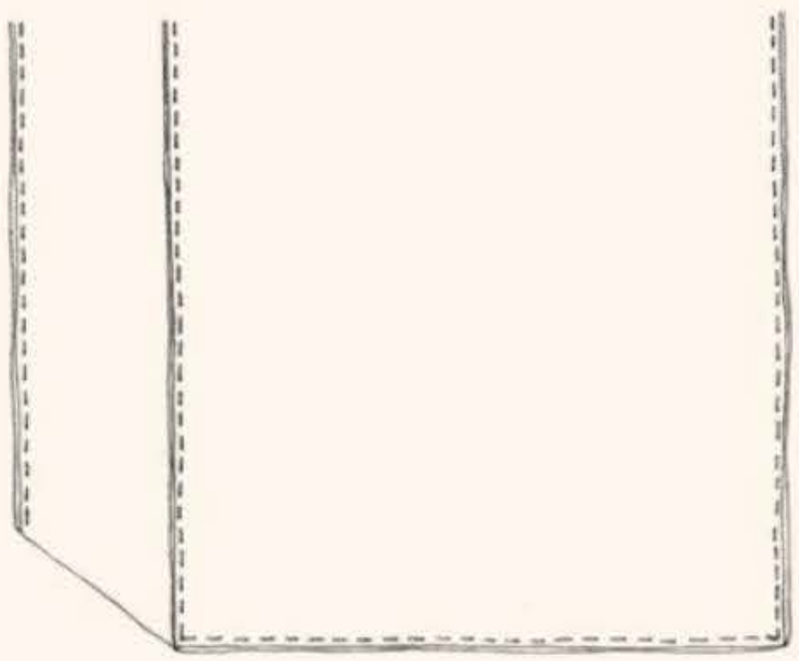


fig 1

fig 2

side of the gusset strip in the same way.

MAKING THE LINING

1. Repeat with the lining pieces.
2. You need to leave an 8cm (3in) gap along one of the lower edges, for turning the bag right sides out later on.

MAKING HANDLES

1. To make the handles, fold one handle strip in half lengthways right sides together and stitch (**fig 2**).
2. Turn right sides out and press with the seam running down the centre (**fig 3**).
3. Repeat this to make the other handle.

ASSEMBLING THE BAG

1. Pin one handle to the front of the bag by placing one short end right sides together on the top edge of the bag 2in (5cm) in from the side seam. Repeat this with the other end of the handle (**fig 4**).
2. Pin the other handle to the back.
3. Turn the lining inside out and place the bag outer with handles inside this so that they are right sides together.
4. Matching side seams, pin together all the way round the top and stitch.

Note: When you have sewn all the way round, go back and stitch through the handle ends a few more times and further into the seam to strengthen them.

FINISHING YOUR BAG

1. Turn the bag right sides out through the gap in the lining then slip stitch the gap closed.
2. Push the lining inside the bag and press. Top stitch around the top edge of the bag to complete.

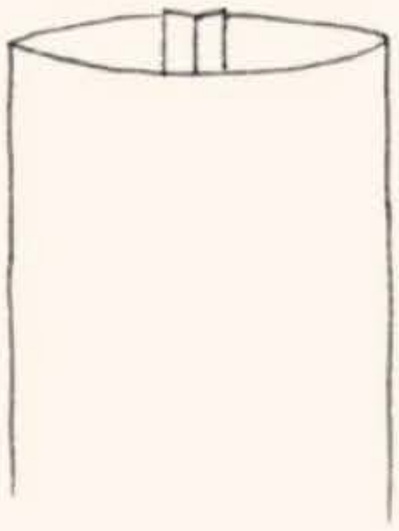


fig 3

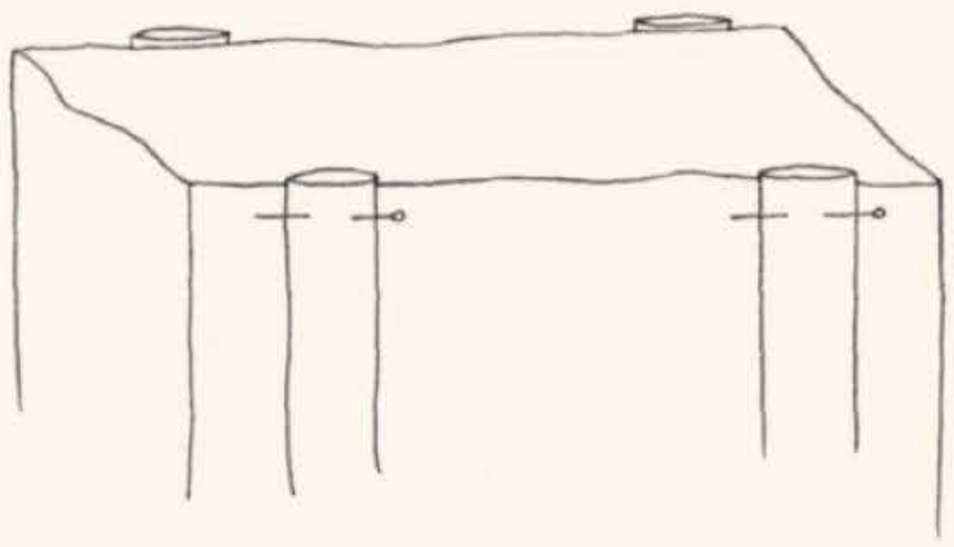


fig 4

BAG HARDWARE

Although your bag is made from fabric there are many different types of hardware you can buy to add a professional look.

MAGNETIC SNAP CLOSURE

1. These are easy to attach and provide a quick way of closing your bag without the need for buttons or buckles. Always insert these before you assemble your bag.
2. You can also buy invisible magnetic snaps which are sewn to the interlining or on the wrong side of the bag lining so they can't be seen from the front of the bag.

TWIST LOCK

1. Twist locks are used to close the front of the bag by attaching the front plate onto the flap then the button part to the main bag. This goes through the front plate and is twisted round to close the bag securely.
2. You should always reinforce areas of fabric with interfacing before you attach the twist lock.
3. Twist locks are best used on bags made from heavier weight fabrics so the bag will support the metal closures.

HOOK AND RING STRAPS

Instead of just stitching your strap directly onto your bag you could attach a D-ring to your bag and a trigger hook to your strap. This way you can remove the straps if you want – ideal if you want to be able to swap between a handle and shoulder strap (**fig 5**).

STRAP SLIDERS

These metal sliders can be used to adjust the length of your bag strap.

1. Thread one end of your strap through the centre bar and stitch in place (**fig 6a**).
2. Take the other end of the strap and thread it through the D-ring at the side of your bag, then thread it back through the slider.
3. Thread it through the D-ring on the other side of the bag and stitch in place.
4. You can now use the slider to adjust the strap length (**fig 6b**).

BAG CLASP FRAMES

You can buy clasp frames which you attach directly to the top of your bag.

1. You will need to make a pattern for your bag which fits the clasp exactly, then attach it when you have made the bag body.
2. Add seam allowances all the way round your bag then make it up with a lining too.
3. Place the top of the bag outer and lining into the clasp frame and glue it into place. Some frames do come with small holes drilled in them, which you can use to stitch your bag into place if you wish to make it more secure.

> "IF YOU WANT TO GIVE YOUR BAG SOME SUPPORT AND MAKE IT LAST LONGER, THEN USE SOME INTERLINING OR INTERFACING BETWEEN THE OUTER AND LINING"

TOP TIPS

GUSSETS

Three separate pieces of fabric have been used for the gusset in our example bag, as this gives the bag more structure than using one long strip. You can use just one strip if you prefer; just cut the strip to the length of one side, the bottom and the other side. It's a good idea to add a little extra too which you can trim later as you may need it to ease around the corners.

ADDING BODY TO YOUR BAG

If you want to give your bag some support and make it last longer then use some curtain interlining or iron-on interfacing between the bag outer and lining. You can put it just in the bottom gusset for structure or on all sides for more support and body if you prefer. Interlining will give your bag strength as well as making it look padded and softer. Interfacing will make the fabric stiffer which is ideal for lighter weight fabrics.

Interlining: Cut pieces of interlining exactly the same size as all your bag outer fabrics (except the handles) then place each one on the wrong side of the fabric pieces and machine zig zag them together all the way round, close to the edges of the fabric.

Interfacing: Iron this onto the back of your bag outer pieces then trim the edges to fit.

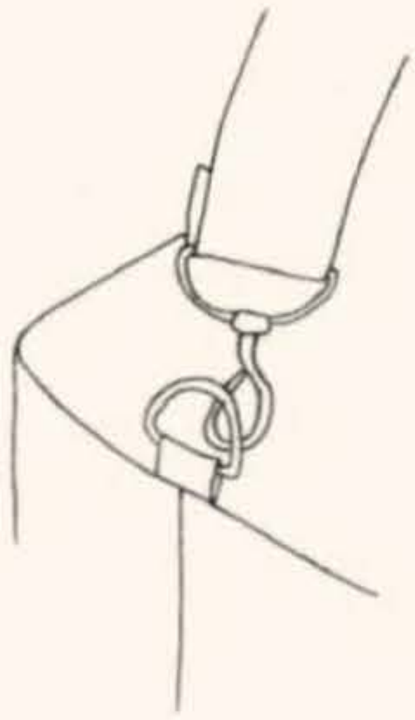


fig 5

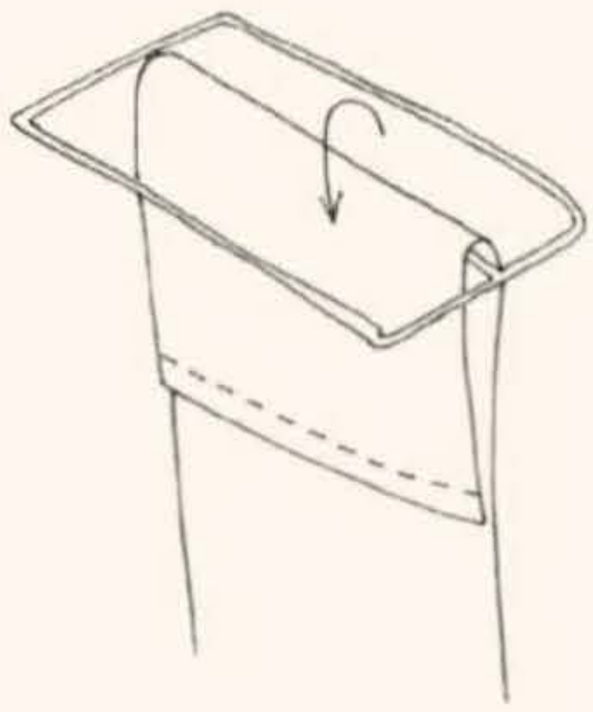


fig 6a

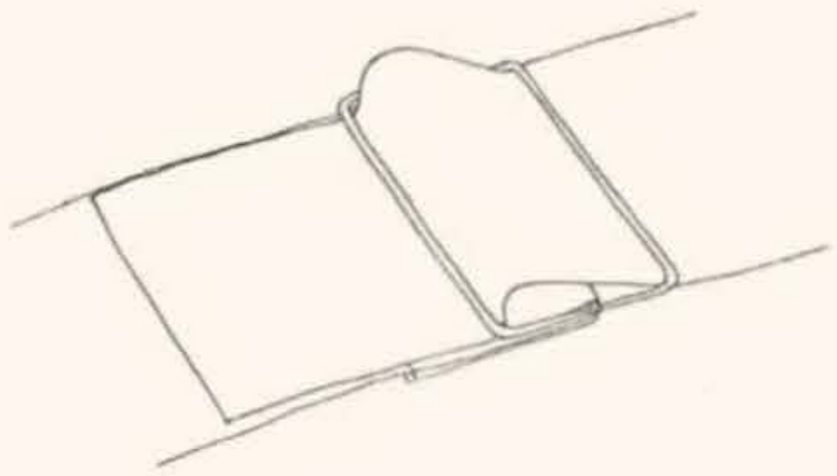


fig 6b

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Everyday Shoulder Bag

This simple yet stylish bag is perfect for just slinging over your shoulder and heading out for the day!

IT'S ALWAYS GREAT when we can combine a fun project with our favourite fabrics and, as well as making something stylish and beautiful, also make something that's truly practical.

This bag is one such project. It's got several interesting techniques to have fun with, and is small enough to splurge on a favourite or luxury fabric to make it really special. It's also something that won't take too long to make, so it's easy to fit into a weekend without having to abandon the weekly shop! But the best thing is the finished object, a stylish shoulder bag that you really will use every day, just the right size to fit under your arm and carry your wallet, phone, and maybe a bit of make-up.

Designer Deborah Moebes suggests making more than one, and experimenting with some piping cord and bias binding for an extra-special edging.

YOU WILL NEED

- 0.46m (½yd) of mid-weight fabric for the body of the bag
- 0.46m (½yd) of lighter weight fabric for the lining
- 0.46m (½yd) of mid-to-heavy-weight fusible interfacing
- 0.46m (½yd) of light-to-sheerweight fusible interfacing
- Matching thread
- Sew-on or magnetic snap closure
- Two D-rings

For stockist details, see page 160

> A STYLISH BAG THAT'S JUST THE RIGHT SIZE TO FIT UNDER YOUR ARM

CUT THE BAG AND LINING

1 Cut two of the bag body pieces from your main fabric, and two from the lining. Repeat with bag gusset. Cut one of the bag straps from your main fabric, and two of the tab (**fig 1**).

2 Interface the outer bag body pieces with heavy-weight fusible interfacing. The heavier this is, the more firm, so the stiffer you want your bag to be, the more serious you want your interfacing to be. It's better not to use ultra-heavy duty interfacing, like Peltex or Timtex, as that will make your bag too difficult to work with at your sewing machine. Repeat with the outer gusset.

3 Now interface the lining of the bag with light-to-sheerweight fusible interfacing. Repeat with the gusset lining, straps and tabs.

ADD THE SNAP FASTENING

4 Add your snap now to make the stitches completely invisible – you can choose from a magnetic or a sew-on snap. Place the snap where you want it to be in the finished bag, on the right side of the lining. Allow 1.3cm (½in) from the upper edge of the lining for seam allowance, plus another 1.3cm (½in) or so for "clearance" when opening the bag – that bit of lip that gives your fingers a place to grip as you pop the snap open.
Mark this spot, then fuse a 5.1 x 5.1cm (2 x 2in) piece of interfacing to the wrong side of the fabric behind the spot where you'll stitch the snap – this will help stop the fabric tearing when you open the bag.

OPTION A: SEW-ON SNAP
To sew the snap on, stitch through the holes in the edge of the snap two or three times, bringing the needle back down as close to the original spot as you can. When you're done with one hole, carry the thread over to the next one on the wrong side of the fabric for an invisible finish. Tie a knot when you're done, then repeat on opposite side of the snap.

OPTION B: MAGNETIC SNAP
Push the points of the magnetic snap parts through the lining fabric to the back, then bend them flush. They'll be hidden on the interior of the lining when the bag is complete.

SEW THE STRAP AND TABS

5 The strap and tabs are all constructed the same way, as double-turned strips of fabric, and they are not lined. Take the interfaced strap and press each long edge in 1.3cm (½in). Press again in half, bringing the two long, pressed edges together. Topstitch along both long sides. Leave raw ends unstitched, for now. Form each tab the same way – and remember to make two!

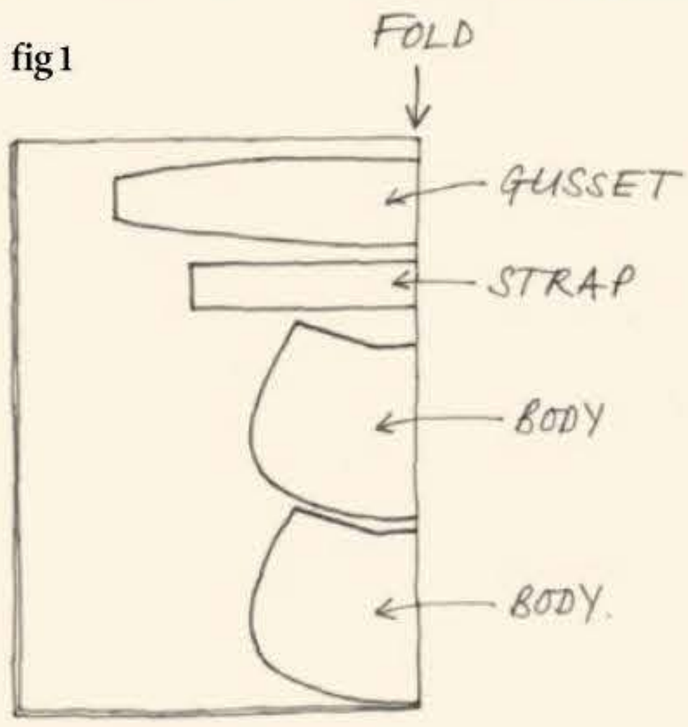
ASSEMBLE THE BAG

6 Take the gusset piece of your outer fabric. Pinch-press the gusset to mark the centre, and do the same to each side of the bag body. Do this by folding the piece in half and giving it a good, tight squeeze – you'll see that you've left behind a teeny mark, which you can use to match up centres without needing to reach for your chalk! Make a similar pinch press at the centre of each of your outer bag sides. Place one bag side right sides together with the gusset, matching up those centre pinch pleats. Sew a 1.3cm (½in) seam from the centre toward the edge, then sew a second seam from the centre toward the other edge. Beginning in the centre means that any excess fabric won't get bunched up at the middle of the bag and leave an ugly and unintended pucker.

7 Pin the other side and stitch. Repeat on the opposite side of the bag, so you have a gusset in the centre that is attached to the bag sides.

8 On both the outer bag and the lining, clip around the edge up to the stitching but not through it, about every 2.5cm (1in) or so (**fig 2**). ▶

fig 1



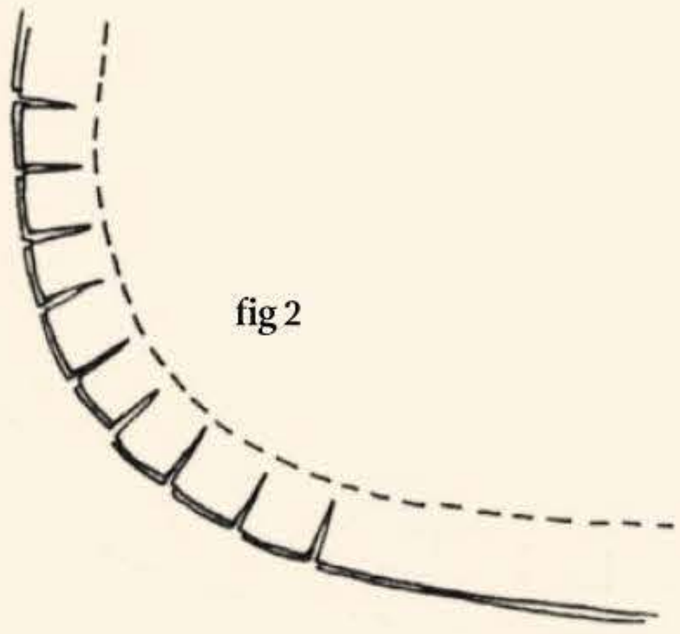


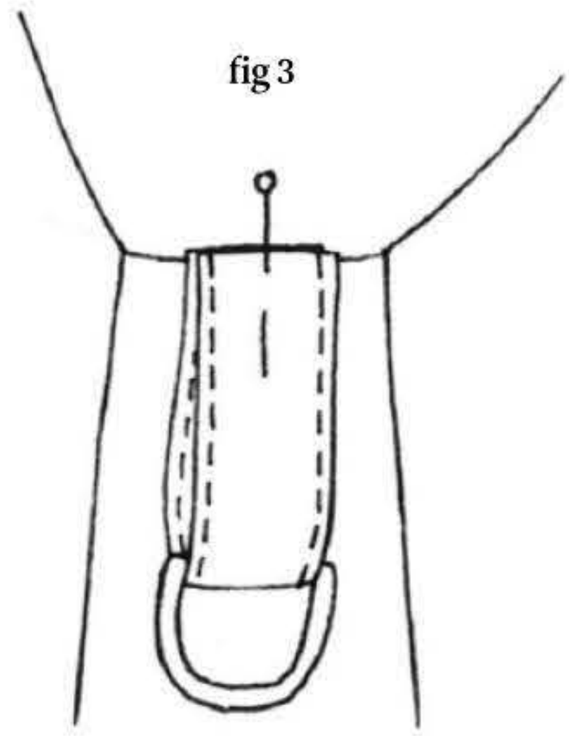
fig 2

Neat topstitching helps to give a professional finish.

ADDING A POCKET

Want to add a simple pocket inside this bag? Simply stitch your pocket on to the lining before attaching the lining to the gusset – if you wait until after, you won't be able to access the edges of the pocket in order to stitch them down. Order of operations is everything (and you thought you'd never use algebra in real life!).

fig 3



9 Before we put the lining and the outer bag together, we'll want to add in the tabs for the bag hardware, so we'll be able to attach the strap when we get to that point. Take one tab and fold it in half. Place a D-ring over one end and leave it pinched in the centre of the tab as it is folded. Pin one tab on each gusset, at the side of the bag. Tabs should have the D-ring hanging down, with raw edges even with the upper raw edge of the gusset (**fig 3**).

10 Slide the lining, wrong-side out, over the outer bag so that the two are right sides together. The tabs are now sandwiched in the middle, with the D-ring caught on the tab. Pin the edge.

11 Stitch a 1.3cm (½in) seam around the entire upper edge of the bag, leaving a small opening to turn right-side out, and catching the tab ends securely in the seam – you can even consider backstitching over the tab ends as you sew past them, to make them more secure, especially if you plan to carry super heavy items in your bag.

12 Reach through the opening in the lining and turn the whole thing right-side out, teasing out the fabric until the whole bag spills out and you're able to stuff the lining back inside. Press.

13 Topstitch all around the upper edge of the bag to close the opening you used to turn, and to create a finished feel to the bag. Make sure you take extra care as you stitch past your snap!

FINISH THE STRAP

14 Tuck the raw edges back into the opening of the strap and neatly stitch the opening closed. Repeat on other side.

15 With the bag right-side out, place one end of the strap through the D-ring, then fold it around the D-ring until the folded edges touch the body of the strap. Stitch in place. Repeat on the opposite tab.

STITCH SAVVY

Published by Krause Publications (£19.99)

A collection of 25 projects by designer Deborah Moebes, designed to take your sewing to the next level. Aimed at intermediate stitchers who are looking to improve, this book works through five categories (home decor, handbags, children's, quilting and clothing), while also focusing on different techniques and cross-referencing these between the categories, enabling you to focus on improving a specific skill. A bonus CD includes PDF patterns for 13 additional stylish projects.

Projects include a pretty tufted duvet, a quilted tea cosy, a beaded evening clutch, a pleated A-line skirt, our stylish everyday shoulder bag and much more. We particularly love the Travel Matching Game – a wonderful treat for young children that will brush up on your snap skills!

Deborah Moebes is the owner of Whipstitch Fabrics (*www.whip-stitch.com*) and a sewing designer and teacher. She teaches a number of sewing e-courses online, and has written two books: *Stitch By Stitch* and *Stitch Savvy*. Her blog is packed with inspiration and an infectious love for sewing.

EVERYDAY SHOULDER BAG

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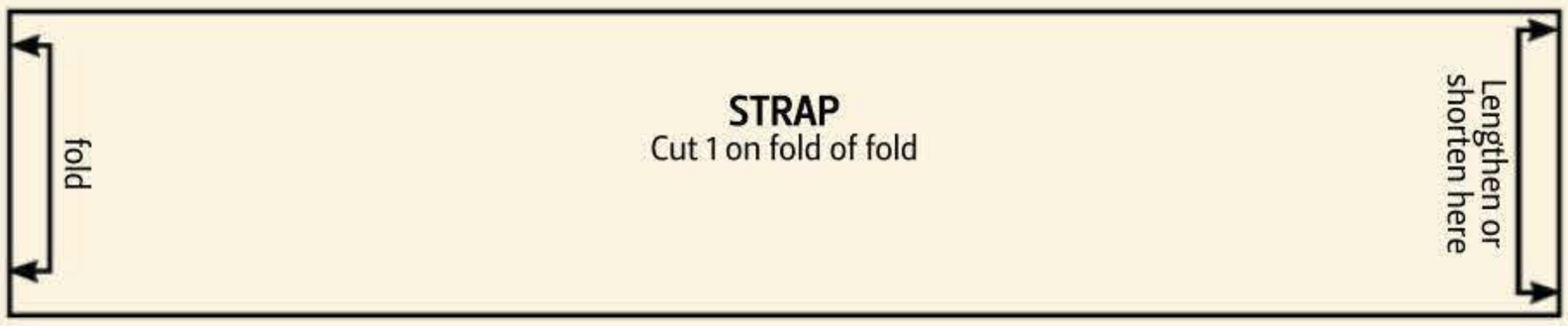
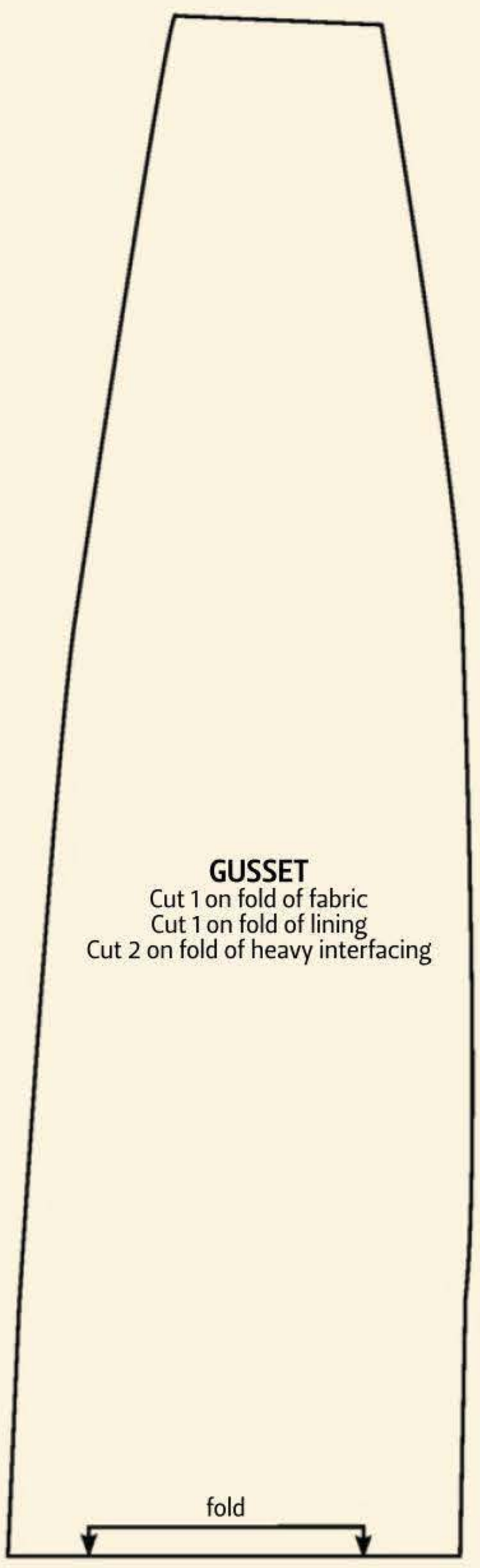
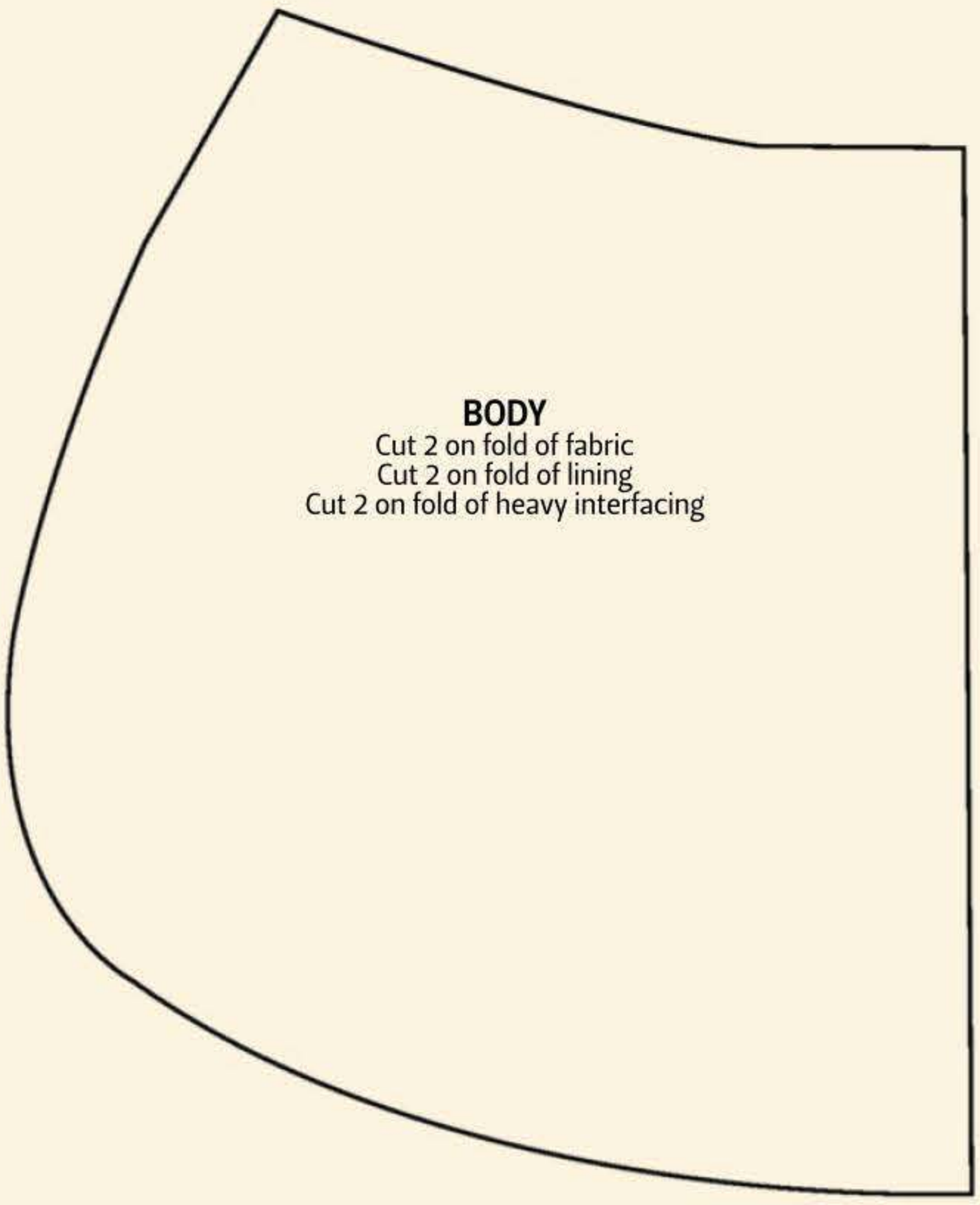


> CONSIDER BACKSTITCHING OVER THE TAB ENDS TO MAKE THEM MORE SECURE, ESPECIALLY IF YOU PLAN TO CARRY SUPER-HEAVY ITEMS IN YOUR BAG





Clasp Purse

This stunning accessory is delicate and pretty, and makes the perfect finishing touch for any outfit.

NO OUTFIT IS complete without the perfect matching bag for your bits and pieces – and what better than a stylish clasp purse that you've made yourself?

Metal clasps add a professional look to homemade bags and purses, and are simple to use once you get the hang of tucking in the fabric. It can be a bit fiddly at first, though, so allow yourself a bit of space and time when making your first purse – because we're sure you'll want to make more than one!

Simply changing the fabric used for this project can completely change the look of the purse, so why not make one for every outfit? Here we've used some plain linen, trimmed with Victorian lace for a delicate, vintage look. Fabrics such as cotton or linen are easier to work with when you're first working with the clasps – once you're more confident, why not try a silk purse for a truly show-stopping accessory?

PREPARE THE PURSE PIECES

1 Iron the interfacing onto the wrong side of your outer fabric to strengthen it.

2 Use the pattern to cut out two clasp purse pieces from the lining fabric and two clasp purse pieces from the outer fabric, ensuring you match the grain on all the pieces by aligning it with the arrow on the pattern. Snip the notches, and mark points A, B and C with pins.

3 Now you're ready to sew. First you need to make pleats in all the purse pieces to give your clasp purse a 'puffy' shape that will also optimise the space for all your bits and pieces inside. To do this, take one of your pieces of fabric and fold it in half, right sides facing, matching up the notches at the top.

4 Pin vertically at the notch, then line up the halfway fold with the pin and open out the fabric to either side to make a pleat with two vertical folds. Iron flat (**fig 1**).

5 Tack the pleat in place, close to the raw outer edge (**fig 1**). Repeat this step for the other three pieces. You can vary the look of your purse by the way you fold your fabric in half – with the pleat on the outside or the inside; experiment before you sew to see which you prefer.

SEW UP THE PURSE

6 Pin the two lining pieces together with right sides facing. Machine stitch around the bottom curved edge, from point A to point B, with a 1cm (¼in) seam allowance. Make sure you secure your stitching at the start and end by reversing. Carefully clip the curves to give a neater finish (**fig 2**). Repeat with the outer fabric pieces, and open out the seams at the sides so that they lie flat.

7 The following steps can get a bit fiddly. You should now have two pouches: one lining and one outer. Turn the lining pouch right side out and sit it inside your outer pouch, matching the side seams. The right sides of the lining and outer should be facing. Pin pouches together at the side seams.

8 Place the purse in front of you, so that one of the side seams is facing you. By hand (which is easier at this point), use backstitch to stitch from point C on one side of the seam to point C on the other side. Sew through both fabrics, leaving a 1cm (¼in) seam allowance.

TOP TIP

If you can't source twisted paper string, the string sometimes used for the handles of brown-paper bags works perfectly instead.

9 Clip the curve a couple of times with your scissors, taking care not to cut your stitches. Turn the pouch around and repeat for the other side seam.

10 Now turn the outer fabric pouch right side out, and manoeuvre the lining pouch so that it sits inside the outer. You'll probably think you've made a mistake at this point and it will all seem a bit wonky, but it should look right soon enough. Concentrate on one element at a time: outer, then lining. You will end up with a nice neat, lined purse pouch when the pieces are correctly turned out. ▶

YOU WILL NEED

- Medium iron-on interfacing: 50 x 25cm (20 x 10in)
- Outer fabric: 50 x 25cm (20 x 10in)
- Lining fabric: 50 x 25cm (20 x 10in)
- Clasp: Our clasp is 17cm (6¾in) at its widest point, but you can adapt the pattern to fit any size
- Paper twine: two 30cm (12in) lengths
- Fabric glue
- Pliers
- Cocktail sticks

For stockist details, see page 160

> "WE'VE USED PLAIN LINEN TRIMMED WITH LACE FOR A DELICATE, VINTAGE LOOK"

fig 1

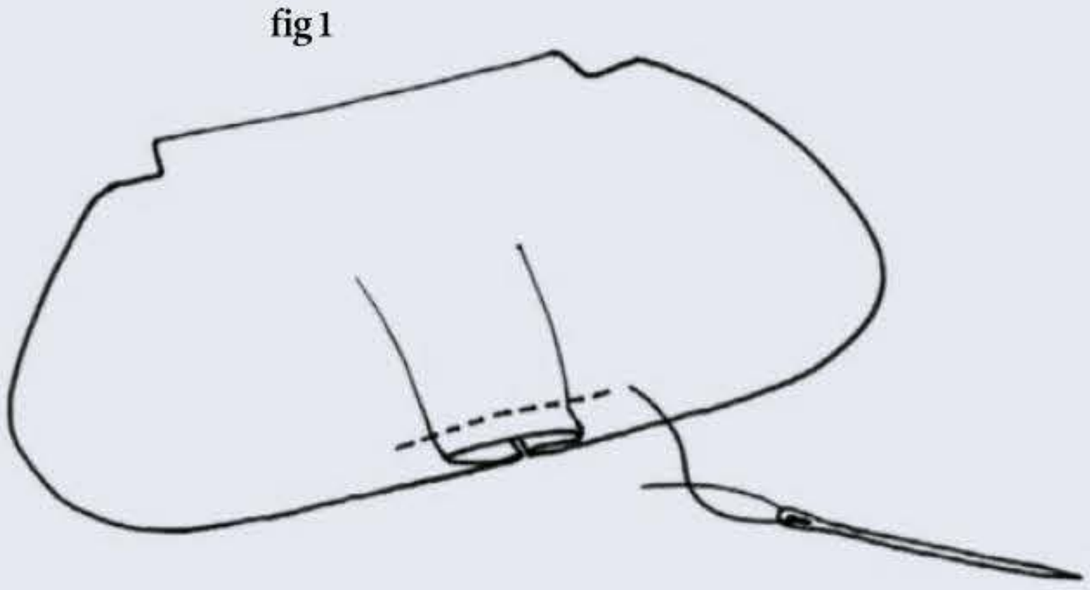
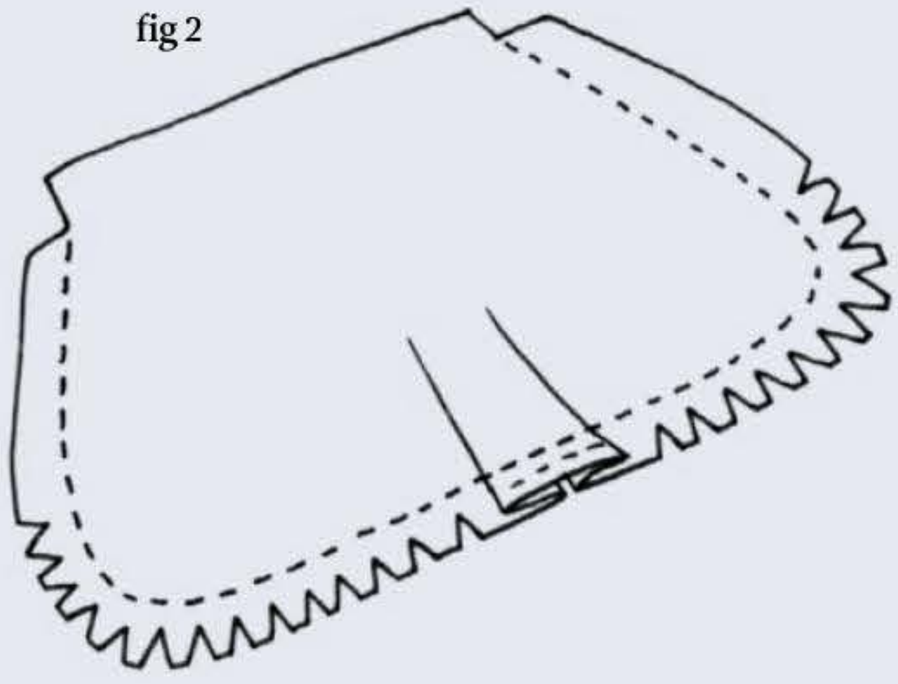


fig 2



11 Match the top (raw) edges of fabric, lining to outer, on each side of the purse. Sew about 10cm (4in) of running stitch by hand along the top curve, close to the edge. This is just to hold the pieces together while you fix the clasp.

ATTACH THE CLASP

12 With the clasp fully open, drop some glue into the channel on one side. Not too thick – you don't want it to ooze out on to your fabric.

13 Take your pouch and match the centre point of one side of the pouch with the centre point of the glued side of the clasp (find the centre point by folding the pouch in half, matching the side seams). Make sure you have the clasp the right way round, so that its outside matches with the fabric outer of the purse.

14 Insert the fabric into the frame, nudging it in with a cocktail stick so that it is tucked right into the clasp channel (**fig 3**). When you're happy with the positioning, quickly push a length of the paper twine in between the fabric and clasp (on the interior side), to hold it in place and fill the gap between the fabric and clasp. You might find that when you push one side in, the other side comes out a bit. Stay with it!

15 With the first side of your purse fully inserted into the clasp, take your pliers and gently squeeze down on the clasp at either end. You might want to pop a scrap of fabric or felt between the pliers and clasp so that the pliers don't leave scratches on the metal of the clasp. Then gently squeeze down all the way around the frame to secure the fabric in place.

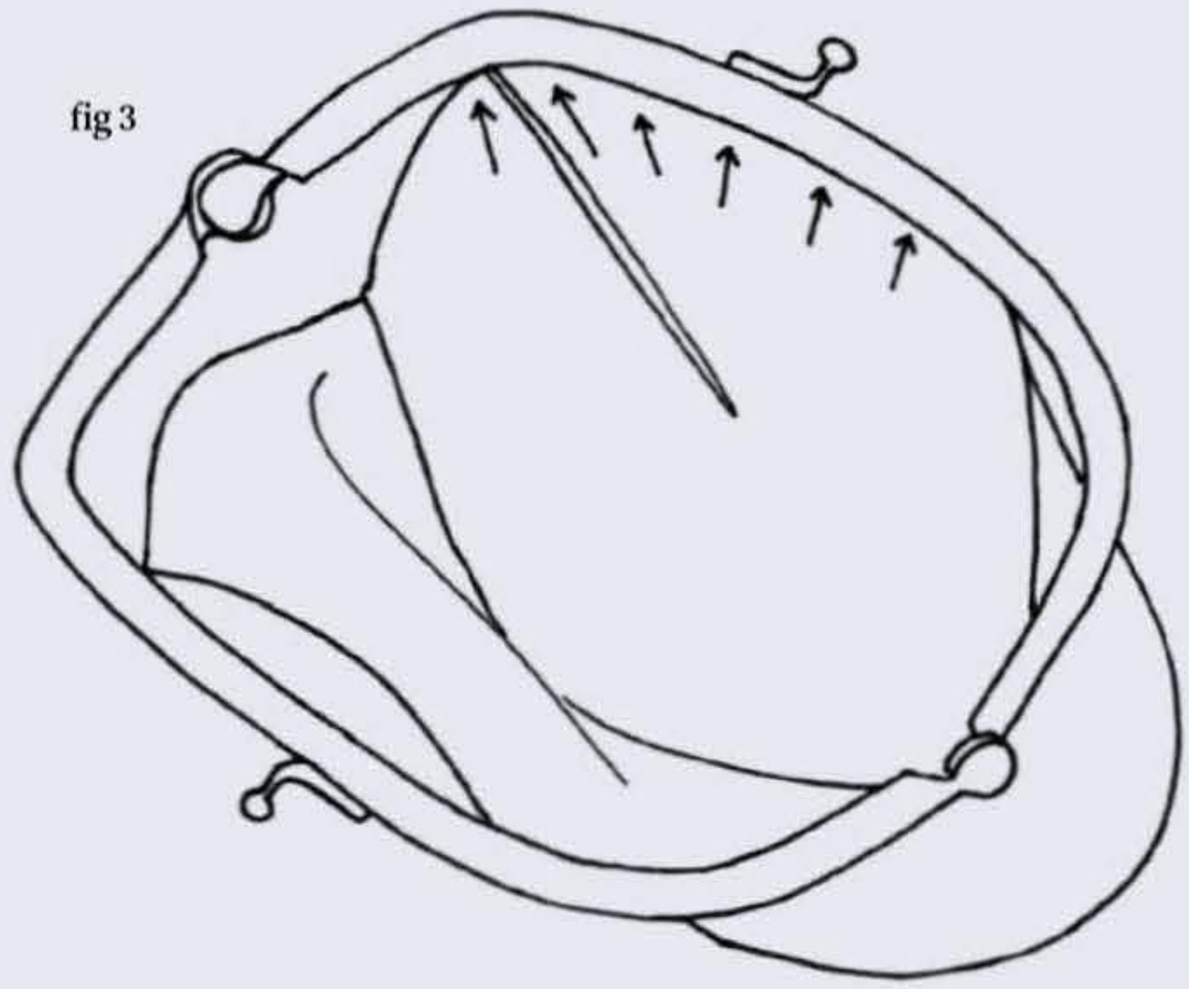
16 You'll notice that the twine extends beyond the end of the clasp – don't worry, just trim it off neatly when you're done so that you can't see it.

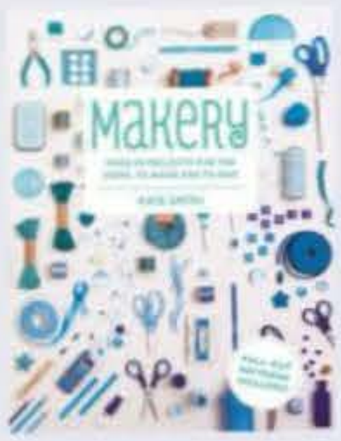
17 Repeat these steps with the other side of the fabric pouch. You should find it slightly easier this time, as the fabric is already more or less held in place on the first side.

TOP TIP

You can buy all sorts of styles and sizes of clasp. The sew-in kind is slightly easier to use, but many people prefer the glue-in look.

fig 3





MAKERY

Written by Kate Smith, who runs the Makery workspace and shop in Bath, this book is packed with irresistible projects that are perfect to gift or keep for yourself. *Makery* (Mitchell Beazley, £14.99) contains more than 30 projects, ranging from pendants and crocheted slippers to an easy-sew summer camisole, oilcloth lunch bag, patchwork pouffe and much more. The book is filled with the sheer joy of making, and is sure to inspire.
www.octopusbooks.co.uk

CLASP PURSE

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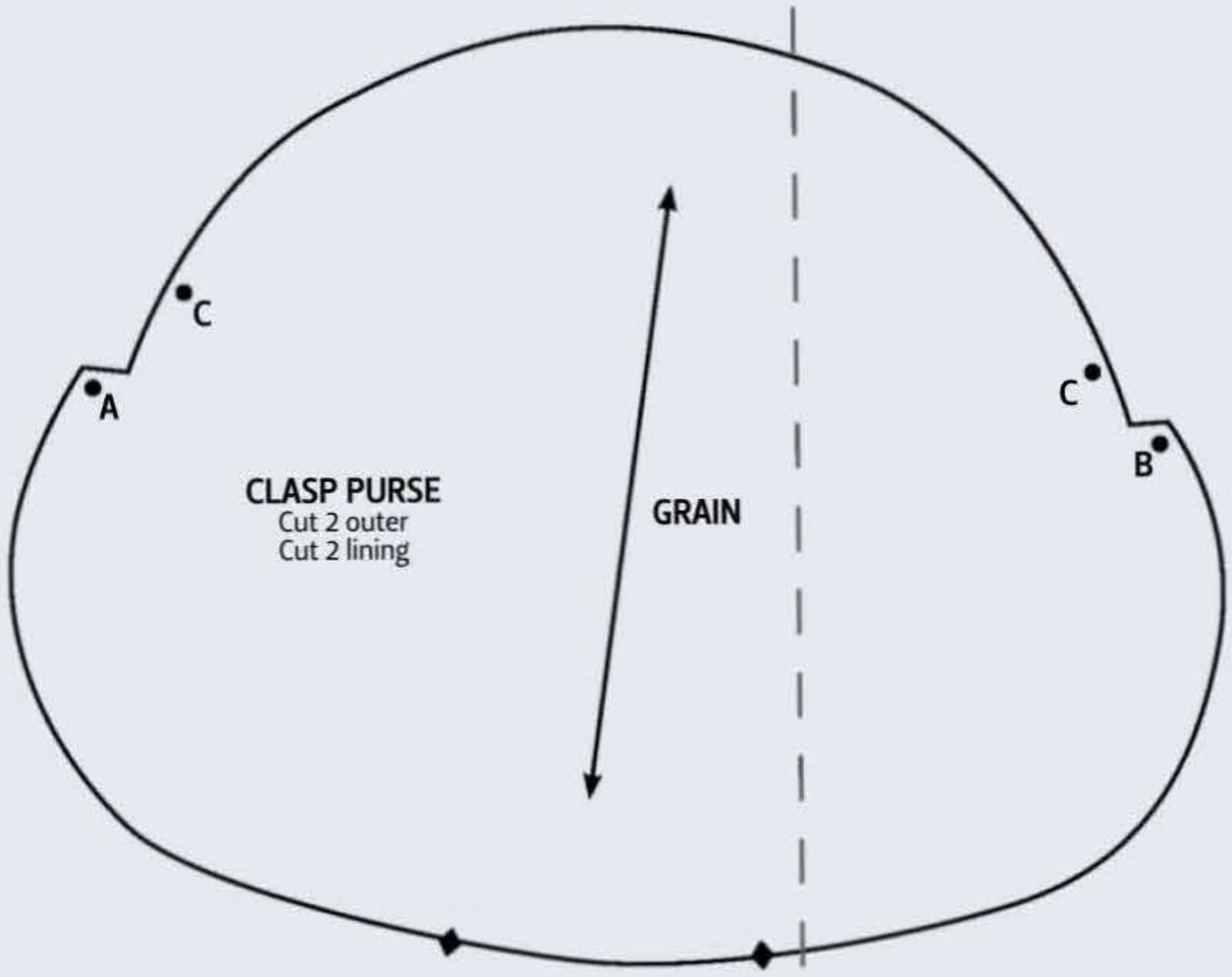

get the look

Fresh & Funky

Try these delightful prints by Japanese brand Kokka, available from The Makery.

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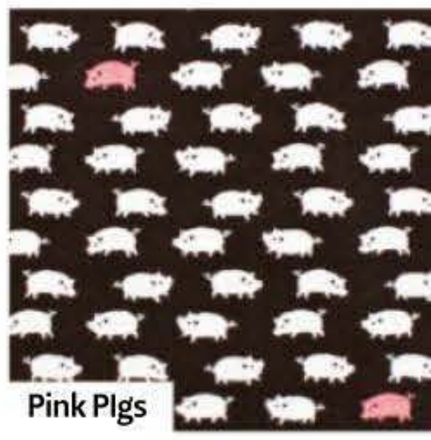

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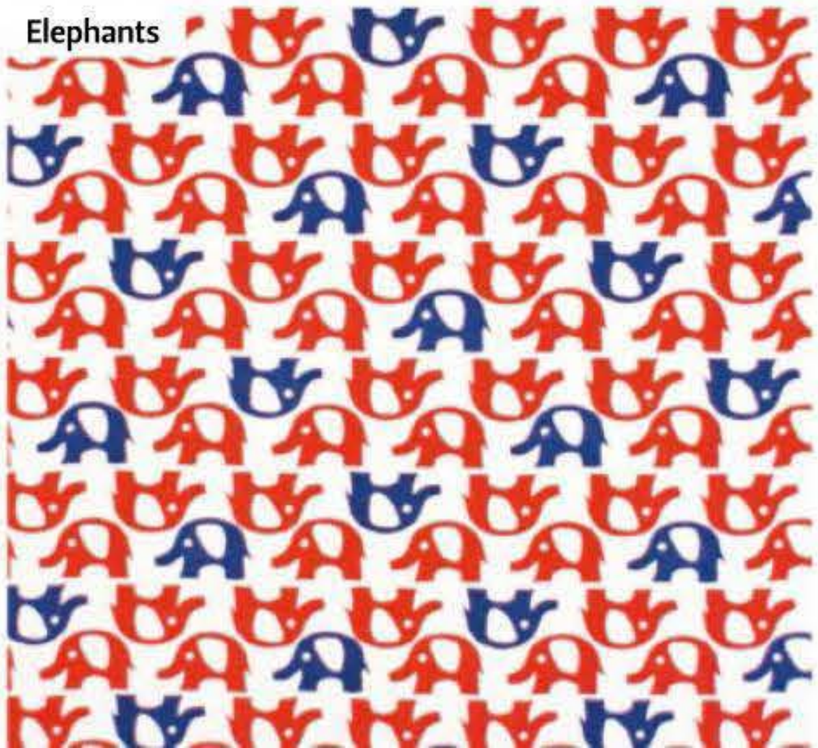
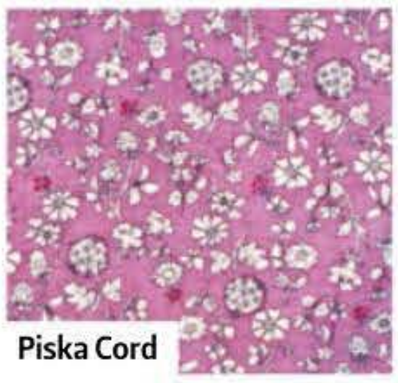


Elephants



Piska Cord

Expert GUIDE

MACHINE QUILTING

Create stunning patchwork and quilted effects using your sewing machine.

Basic machine patchwork involves cutting fabric pieces and joining them together in strips, then rows. Using a rotary cutter, ruler and mat to cut these pieces makes this job much easier. Once you've mastered this technique, though, there are other methods you can use as well to create more elaborate quilts. Foundation piecing is one of these.

FOUNDATION PIECING

This is the best method for producing more complex block patterns, such as the Mariner's Compass, which have many small, sharp angles. It's also an ideal method for miniature patchwork. Sometimes called Paper Piecing, this technique uses a numbered paper or muslin pattern as a foundation which will give you precisely-pieced blocks. The foundation piece of fabric or paper is used to attach the top patchwork pieces to. Usually a fine cotton fabric in white or cream is used as you have to be able to see through it to trace the pattern. You can also use greaseproof paper, freezer paper, non-fusible interfacing or muslin. If you use a paper foundation then you will need to remove this if you intend to wash your finished piece.

HOW TO WORK

1. First you need a pattern to work from – you can buy these or make your own. Have a look at books, magazines or online to find ideas for foundation patterns. Now trace this pattern onto a piece of fabric or paper (**fig 1**).

2. Take the fabrics you want to use for your patchwork and roughly cut them into pieces large enough to cover the individual sections of your pattern. They don't need to be precise but need about 1cm (3/8in) seam allowance all round.

3. Place your first fabric piece with the wrong side of the fabric against the unmarked side of the foundation piece over the first number on the pattern. Hold it up to the light to make sure it covers the area fully then pin in place (**fig 2**).

4. Next, place your second piece of fabric onto the front of the block, right sides together with the first piece. Hold your fabric and foundation piece up to the light to make sure your fabric is positioned correctly, covering the pattern area and including a 6mm (1/4in) seam allowance. Stitch both pieces of fabric to the back of the foundation piece, extending stitching 3mm (1/8in) beyond the printed seam line (**fig 3**).

5. Turn the work over to the right side and finger press the second piece of fabric in place. Use a ruler to trim seam allowance to 6mm (1/4in) then pin into place (**fig 4**).

6. Continue adding fabric patches in numerical order until your block is complete. Trim excess fabric and

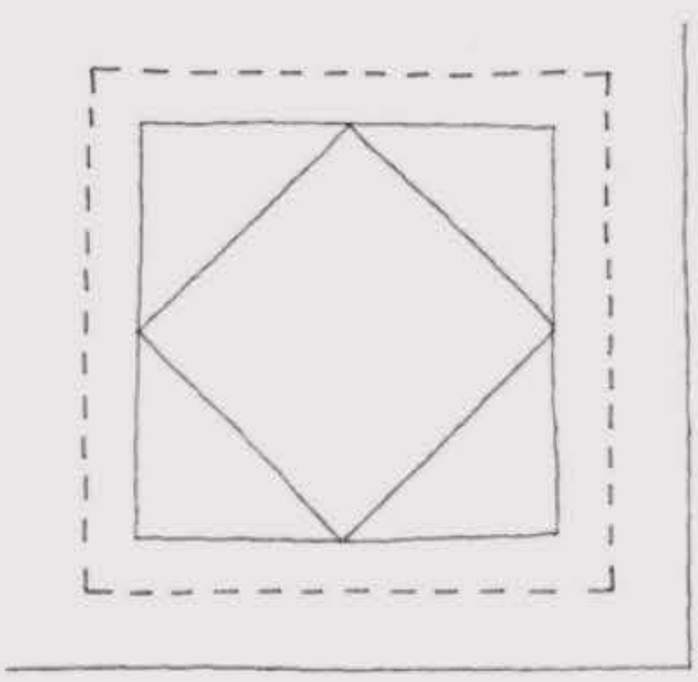


fig 1

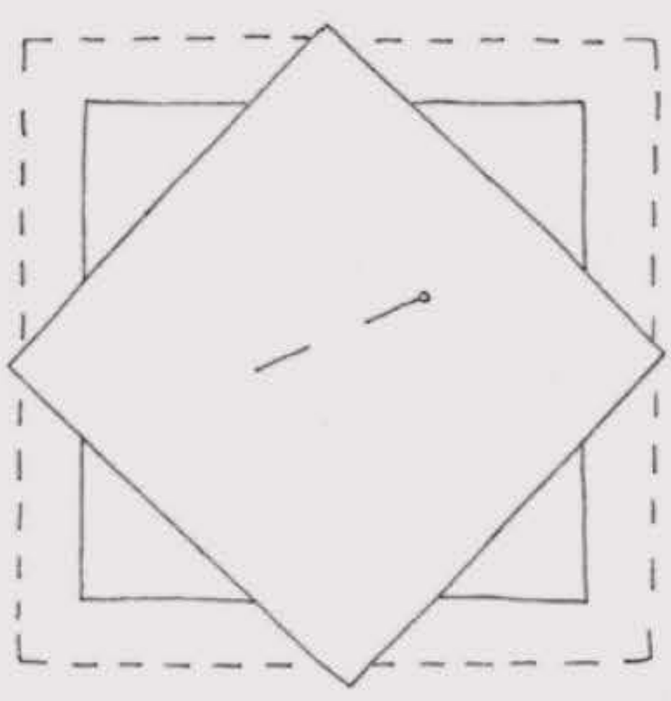


fig 2

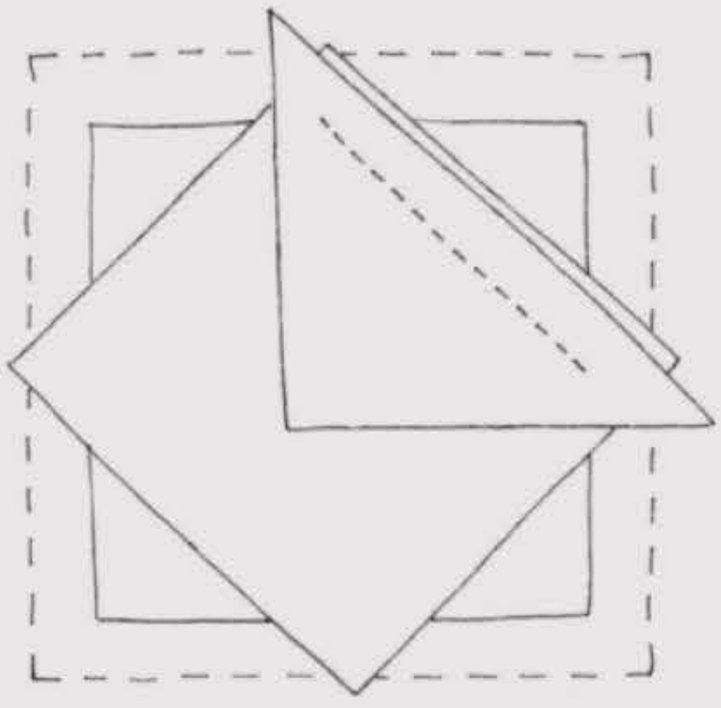


fig 3

foundation along outermost pattern line, leaving a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance so you can join the blocks together if you wish (**fig 5**).

❼ If you have used paper as your foundation, you'll now need to carefully remove this.

FREE MACHINE QUILTING

Straight line quilting is the easiest type of machine quilting for a beginner and simply involves sewing through all layers of quilt top, wadding and your backing fabric. However, once you have mastered this it's time to have a go at free machine quilting, also called free-motion machine quilting.

It does require a little practice to master, but the results are well worth the effort. It's ideal for creating beautiful and decorative quilting patterns.

HOW TO FREE MACHINE QUILT

You will need a special machine foot called a darning or free-motion foot. This has a rounded toe that travels just above the surface of the fabric.

❶ You will need to set up your sewing machine to begin. You will be feeding the quilt through the machine manually, so you will need to disengage your machine's feed dogs. On some machines, you disengage the feed dogs by turning a knob which lowers them out of position – read your manual to find out just how to do this on your machine.

❷ You don't need to adjust the length of the straight-stitch on your machine as the speed at which you are sewing combined with the speed at which you move the quilt around under the needle determines the stitch length. This means it's important to practise first on a spare piece of fabric to get it right.

Foundation piecing is a great way to create more complex block patterns.

❸ Once you have inserted the darning foot and disengaged the feed dogs, thread your sewing machine and the bobbin in the usual way.

❹ Place your quilt under the foot with one hand positioned on each side of the quilt, a short distance away. Use your hands to guide the quilt in the necessary direction under the darning foot.

❺ Slowly begin stitching, making two or three stitches in the same place to secure the thread. As you stitch, move the quilt, guiding it with your two hands. If you have marked lines on your quilt then follow these but if not just make up the pattern as you go. Keep the machine at a steady speed and move the fabric slowly and smoothly so you don't end up with gaps or overly long stitches.

❻ Practise first, then use your imagination to create beautiful effects.

TOP TIPS

Always work from the back of the block, as the design created will be reversed after construction.
Use small stitches, especially if you intend to tear the paper away afterwards.
If you don't have a light box to use to transfer your design, tape it to a window and trace in daylight.

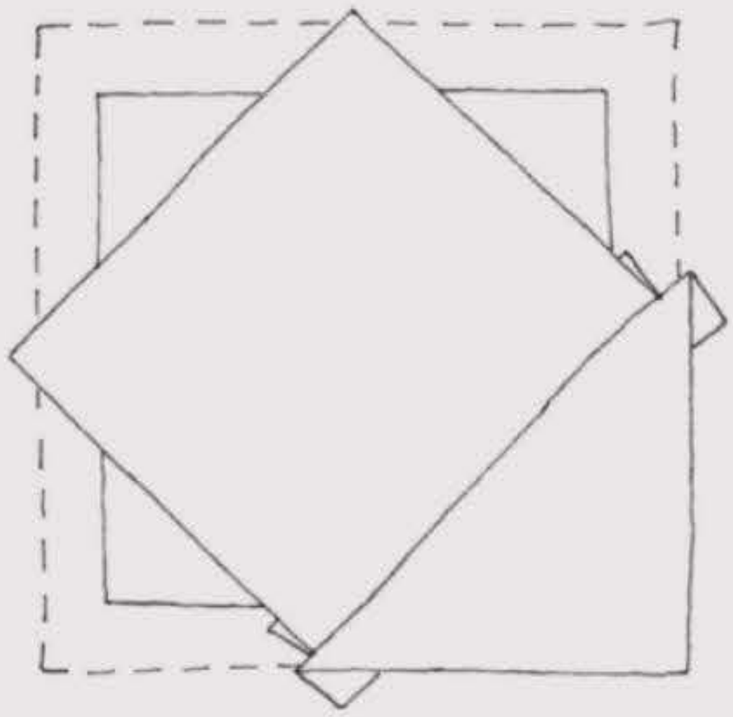


fig 4

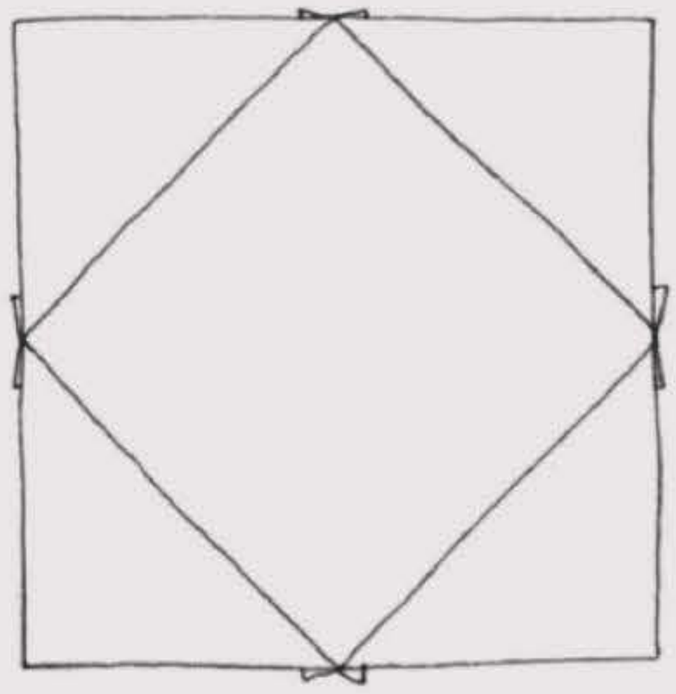
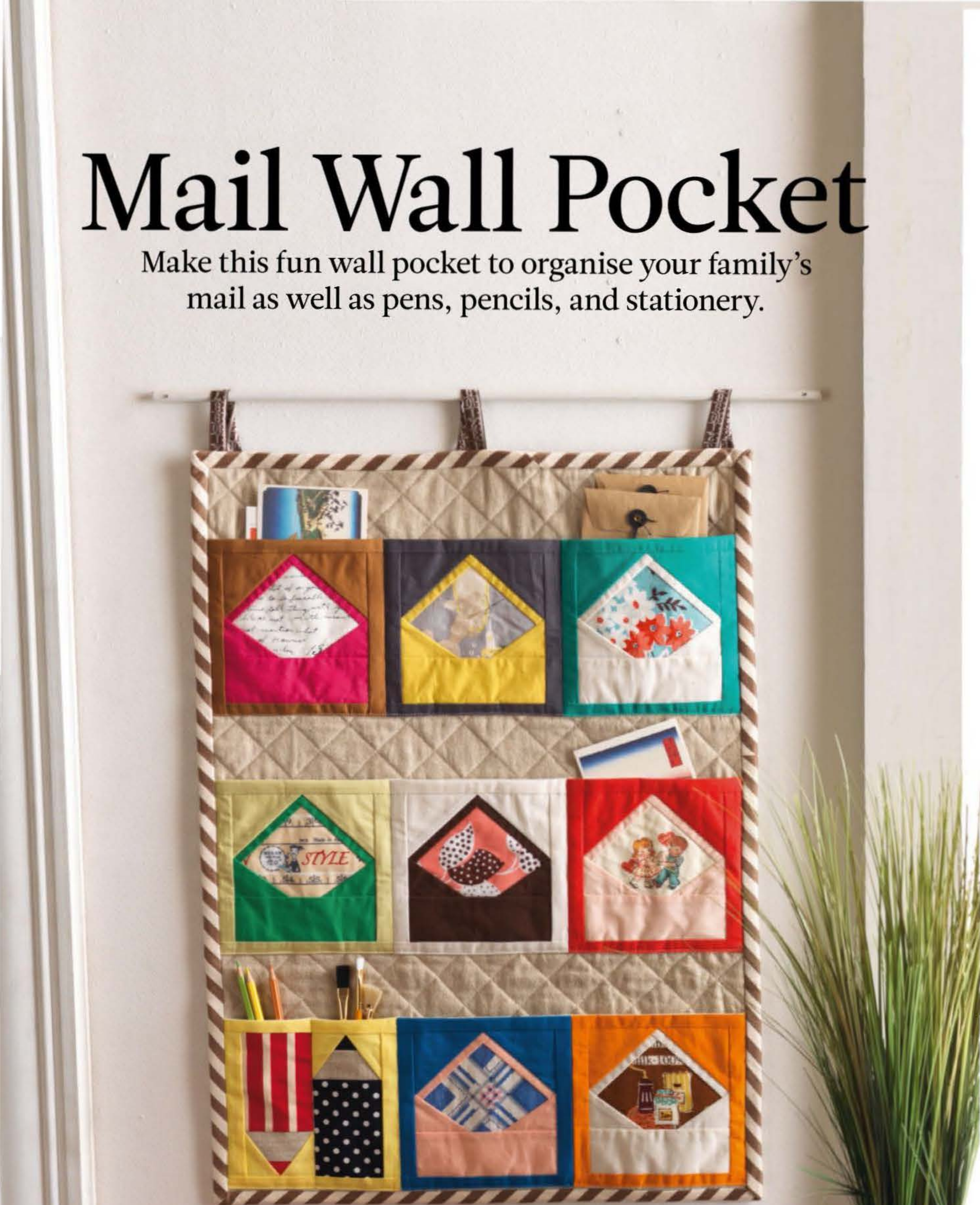


fig 5

"THIS TECHNIQUE USES A NUMBERED PAPER OR MUSLIN PATTERN AS A FOUNDATION WHICH WILL GIVE YOU PRECISELY PIECED BLOCKS"

Mail Wall Pocket

Make this fun wall pocket to organise your family's mail as well as pens, pencils, and stationery.



DOES YOUR FAMILY'S post tend to end up thrown onto a nearby table or sofa arm, ready to fall and be lost at the slightest knock? Get your mail organised with this cheery wall hanging – it's fun to make, nice to look at and will ensure you never lose an important bill again!

You can easily alter the pattern to make as many or as few pockets as you wish, to suit your household's needs. You could even label each pocket with a name, so everyone knows exactly where to go if they're expecting something nice! The pattern includes narrower pockets for pens and pencils, as well as a wider pocket for larger pieces of mail.

PAPER-PIECE BLOCKS

❶ Both templates call for 16.5cm (6½in) high blocks without seam allowances. The pencil block template is 8.5cm (3¼in), so when two pencils are joined, they match the 16.5cm (6½in) width of the envelope block. You will need eight papers with an envelope block printed (one block per paper) and one paper with two pencil blocks printed.

❷ Using the paper-piecing method, complete eight envelopes and two pencils, trimming interior block seams to 6mm (¼in). Blocks should be same size as template plus 1.3cm (½in) seam allowance on all sides. When you are done paper-piecing, trim the excess fabric. Leave the paper on as a stabiliser.

❸ Place two pencil blocks next to each other with one pointing up and the other pointing down. Place one on top of the other, with one long edge matching. Sew along the edge so that you will have a block of two pencils next to each other, with a border around it as shown.

❹ Decide on the placement of the blocks, creating three rows of three blocks each.

❺ To make the first horizontal row of three blocks, sew the left block to the middle block along the left side, and then the right block to the middle block along the right side. Press. With the right sides together, place the print for pocket backing on top of the row and sew along both long edges (top and bottom). Press open seams. Trim corners. Turn the piece right side out from the opening and press. Repeat the same process for the remaining two rows. Set aside.

MAKE A WALL POCKET BASE

❻ Sandwich batting between the linen and the print backing, with wrong sides facing the batting. Spray adhesive thoroughly on the wrong sides of the linen and the print to temporarily attach them to the batting. Smooth to make sure there are no wrinkles.

❼ Quilt as desired. Here, each line of ▶

Narrower pockets allow you to keep pens and pencils close at hand.

YOU WILL NEED

LINEN
- One 62 x 80cm (24½ x 31½in) rectangle for front base
- Two scraps measuring at least 6.5 x 9cm (2½ x 3½in) for pencil wooden parts

ASSORTED COTTON PRINTS
- Eight scraps measuring at least 11.5 x 14cm (4½ x 5½in) for eight envelopes
- Two scraps measuring at least 11.5 x 9cm (4½ x 3½in) for two pencil bodies

ASSORTED COTTON SOLIDS
- Nine scraps measuring at least 25.5 x 25.5cm (10 x 10in) for envelope backgrounds
- Eight scraps measuring at least 20.5 x 20.5cm (8 x 8in) for envelopes
- Two scraps measuring at least 5 x 5cm (2 x 2in) for pencil tops

COTTON PRINT
- 45.5cm (½yd) for binding tape
- One 62 x 80cm (24½ x 31½in) rectangle for backing

COTTON OR LINEN PRINT
- Three 52 x 19cm (20½ x 7½in) rectangles for pocket backing

COTTON BATTING
- One 62 x 80cm (24½ x 31½in) rectangle

- Three 18cm (7in) long ribbons for hangers
- Nine papers (one paper for each of eight envelopes, one paper for two pencil blocks) for paper-piecing and to be left on as a stabiliser
- Quilting adhesive spray
- Washi tape or masking tape
- Fabric glue

NOTES
All seam allowances are 1.3cm (½in), unless otherwise indicated.

FINISHED SIZE
52 x 70cm (20½ x 27½in)

For stockist details, see page 160

TOP TIP

Washi tape is useful as a "ruler," to achieve a straight line for the first quilting row of stitches. A quilting guide helps ensure even spacing between quilted lines.

diagonal quilting was spaced about 3.8cm (1½in) apart.

8 Once the piece is quilted, trim the excess material so the final piece measures 52 x 70cm (20½ x 27½in).

9 Place the first row of envelope blocks so that the top edge of the row is 7.5cm (3in) from the top edge of the quilted linen and pin in place. Sew very close to the bottom edge on the pocket all the way from the right edge to the left. If you wish to divide the pocket into three sections with the blocks, stitch in the ditch of the seam lines that are connecting the middle block to the right block, as well as to the left block.

10 Place two more rows on the base so that there is about 5.5cm (2¼in) between the bottom edge of the top row to the top edge of the second row. The same spacing is also used between the second and third rows.

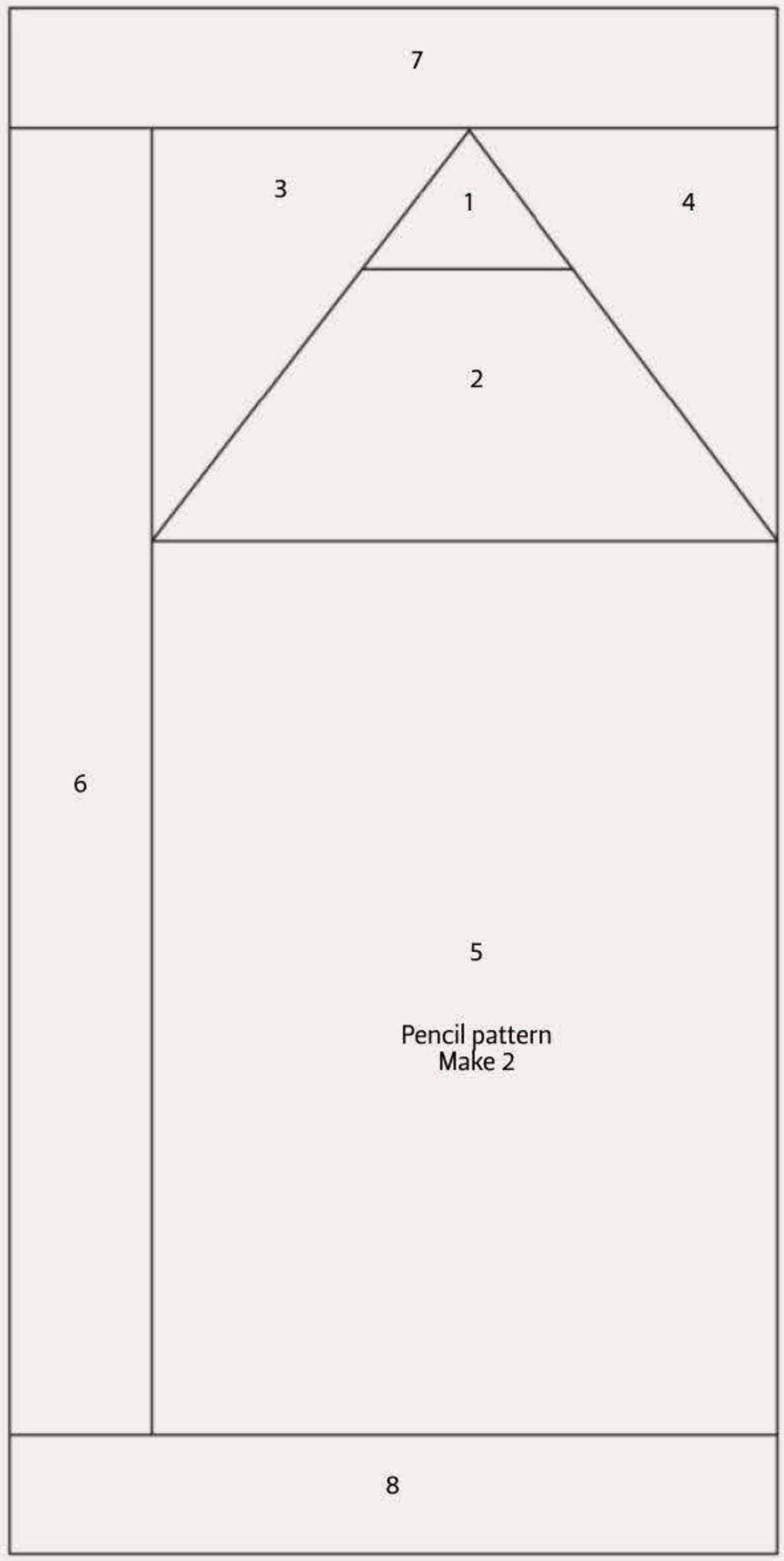
11 Sew the second and third rows in the same manner you sewed the first row to the base. On the third row, there is no division between two envelope blocks. There is a division between the pencils to make two narrow pockets.

12 Machine-baste three ribbons at the top edge of the base on the back. Place one ribbon in the middle of the top edge: have the two short edges align with the top edge, pin in place, and sew very close to the short edges. Sew two other ribbons close to corners at the top edge, making sure to leave at least 1.3cm (½in) spacing from each side edge for attaching a binding tape.

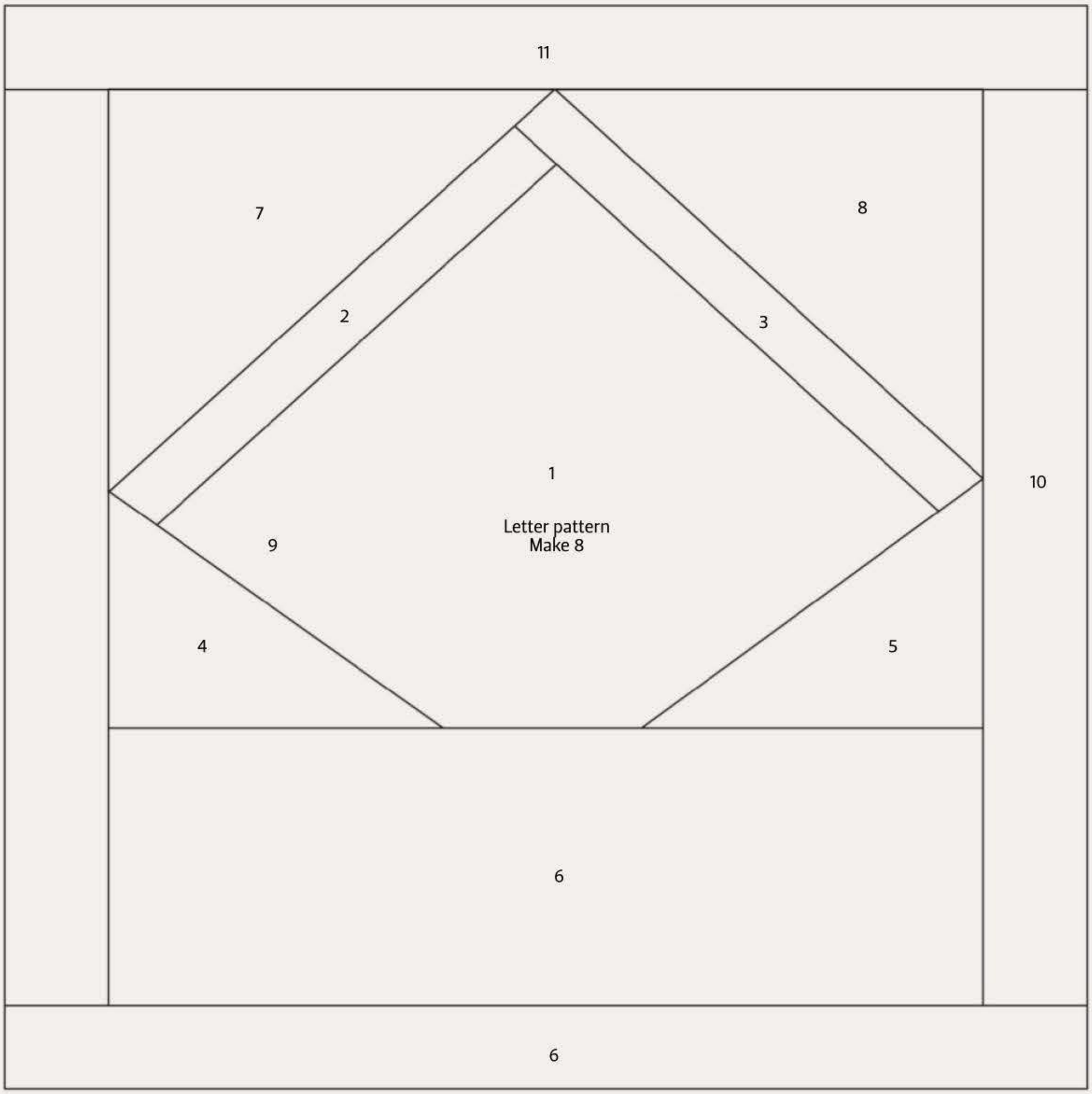
13 Make a double-fold binding tape. Cut out 9.5cm (3¾in) wide bias strips. Sew the short edges together to create one strip that is at least 264cm (104in) long. Fold in half lengthwise with RS together and press. Start somewhere in the middle on one edge, and leave about 12.5cm (5in) without sewing. Stop about 12.5cm (5in) from the short edge of the binding tape where you started and backstitch. Draw a line where the binding tape overlaps 1.3cm (½in) and trim the excess. Use a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance to sew together the short edges. Finish sewing the binding to the organiser.

14 Handstitch to finish attaching binding tape to the back. Next, tack the ribbons to the binding so that the wall pocket will hang straight when mounted.

PENCIL AND ENVELOPE
Actual size



HANDSTITCH TO FINISH, ATTACHING BINDING TAPE TO THE BACK, THEN TACK THE RIBBONS TO THE BINDING TO HANG



PATCHWORK PLEASE

Fill your home with pretty and practical projects using this fun and quirky book by Ayumi Takahashi (Interweave, £16.99). With 19 projects there's something for every skill level, and Ayumi introduces appliqué, machine stitching, paper piecing and more. We love the colourful hexagon trivets, and the Piece-of-Cake shopping bag is truly ingenious, as well as being fun to work. For more quilting inspiration, read Ayumi's blog, The Pink Penguin, at *www.ayumills.blogspot.com*.

London's Calling

Create a geometric quilt that's bursting with flower power.

WHEN YOU'RE QUILTING with intricately patterned fabrics, often the best way to display them is to use simple, straight lines, such as in Pat Bravo's stunning London Calling quilt. The design shows off her beautiful "Carnaby Street" fabrics without overpowering them.

Once you've sewn your top, how you quilt your blanket is up to you – doodles, patterns or straight lines. Just have fun!

CUTTING OUT

For columns cut:
Four 9 x 154cm (3½ x 60½in) strips from fabric A*.
Two 21.5 x 154cm (8½ x 60½in) strips from fabric A*.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric B.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric C.
Two 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric D.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric E.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric F.
Two 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric G.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric I.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric J.
Two 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric K.
Two 9 x 154cm (3½ x 60½in) strips from fabric K*.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric L.
Three 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric M.
One 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles from fabric N.

For sashing cut:
Eight 4 x 154cm (1½ x 60½in) strips from fabric H*.

For borders cut:
Two 4 x 184cm (1½ x 72½in) strips from fabric H*.

* In order to get these long strips you will need to join two or more strips together.

CONSTRUCT COLUMN A

1 The first column (Column A) is made up of two 9 x 154cm (3½ x 60½in) strips from fabric A and one 9 x 154cm (3½ x 60½in) strip from fabric K.

2 Sew them in the order AKA on the long side of the strips (**fig 1**).

YOU WILL NEED

Art Gallery Fabrics, Carnaby Street by Pat Bravo. Fabric is 114cm (45in) wide.

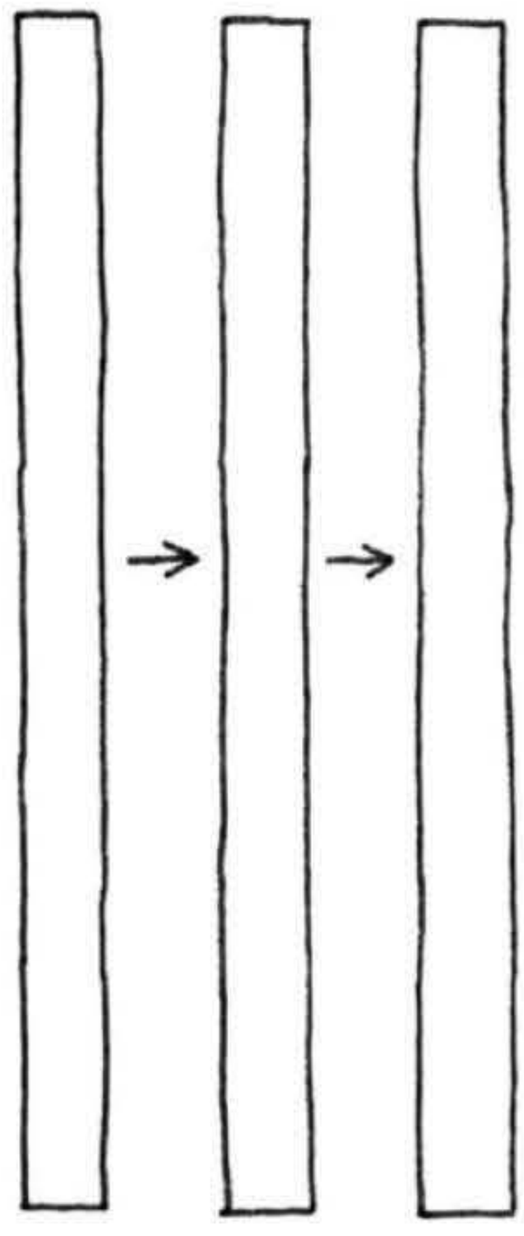
- Fabric A CST-3207 x 171.5cm (1⅞yd)
- Fabric B CST-3104 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric C CST-3109 x 57cm (⅝yd)
- Fabric D CST-3201 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric E CST-3103 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric F CST-3102 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric G CST-3206 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric H CST-3107 x 91cm (1yd)
- Fabric I CST-3100 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric J CST-3105 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric K CST-3204 x 61cm (⅔yd)
- Fabric L CST-3101 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric M CST-3108 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Fabric N CST-3106 x 23cm (¼yd)
- Backing fabric CST-3104 x 366cm (4yd)

FINISHED SIZE
184 x 159cm (72½ x 62½in)

NOTES
Fabric C will also be used for binding your quilt
Seam allowances are 0.6cm (¼in) unless otherwise noted
Fabrics are sewn right sides together unless otherwise noted

For stockist details, see page 160

fig 1



3 Press seams open. Repeat to make a total of two of these columns to complete quilt.

CONSTRUCT COLUMN B

4 The other type of column (Column B) is made with ten of the 16.5 x 26.5cm (6½ x 10½in) rectangles which were cut from all the different fabrics.

5 There are three of these columns in the quilt, all of which mix the fabrics differently. For the first column attach the rectangles on the longer sides following the fabric order of EBLIFCMJKG (**fig 2**). Press all seams open.

6 For the second column follow the fabric order of CMFJGBIDEL. Press all seams open.

7 For the third column follow the fabric order of BNIEKLCFMJ.

ASSEMBLE THE QUILT TOP

8 Start from the left following a vertical order. Press seams open as you sew. Begin with a horizontal border strip, sewing it to one Column A.

9 Continue with one sashing strip, the first Column B, and another sashing strip. Proceed to attach a 21.5 x 154cm (8½ x 60½in) strip from fabric A then another sashing strip, the second Column B, another sashing strip, the remaining 21.5 x 154cm (8½ x 60½in) strip from fabric A, the third Column B, a sashing strip, the remaining Column A, and end with the last horizontal border strip.

10 Attach the top and bottom border strips by finding both of the centres and pinning before you sew. Press all seams open and remove loose threads.

QUILT ASSEMBLY

11 Place backing fabric on a large surface wrong side up. Stretch it with masking tape against that surface. Place batting on top of backing fabric. Place quilt top on top of the batting with right side facing up. Smooth away wrinkles using your hands. Pin all layers together and baste with basting thread, using long stitches. You can also use safety pins to join the layers.

12 Machine or hand quilt starting at the centre and working towards the corners.

13 After you finish, trim any excess fabric or batting, squaring the quilt.

BINDING

14 Cut enough strips 4cm (1½in) wide of fabric C to sew together and make a final strip 711cm (280in) long. Start sewing the binding strip in the middle of one of the sides of the quilt, placing the strip right side down and leaving a 12.5cm (5in) tail. Sew with 0.6cm (¼in) seam allowance (using straight stitch), aligning the strip's raw edge with the quilt top's raw edge.

15 Stop stitching 0.6cm (¼in) before the edge of the quilt (**fig 3**). Clip the threads. Remove the quilt from under the machine presser foot. Fold the strip in a motion of 45° and upward, pressing with your fingers (**fig 4**). Hold this fold with your finger, bring the strip down in line with the next edge, making a horizontal fold that aligns with the top edge of the quilt (**fig 5**). Start sewing at 0.6cm (¼in) of the border, stitching all the layers. Do the same in the four corners of the quilt.

16 Stop stitching before you reach the last 12.5–15cm (5–6in). Cut the threads and remove the quilt from under the machine presser foot. Lay the loose ends of the binding flat along the quilt edge, folding the ends back on themselves where they meet. Press them together to form a crease. Using this crease as the stitching line, sew the two open ends of the binding with right sides together (you can help yourself marking with a pencil if the crease is difficult to see).

17 Trim seam to 0.6cm (¼in) and press open. Complete the sewing. Turn binding to back of the quilt, turn raw edge inside and stitch by hand using blind stitch.

fig 2

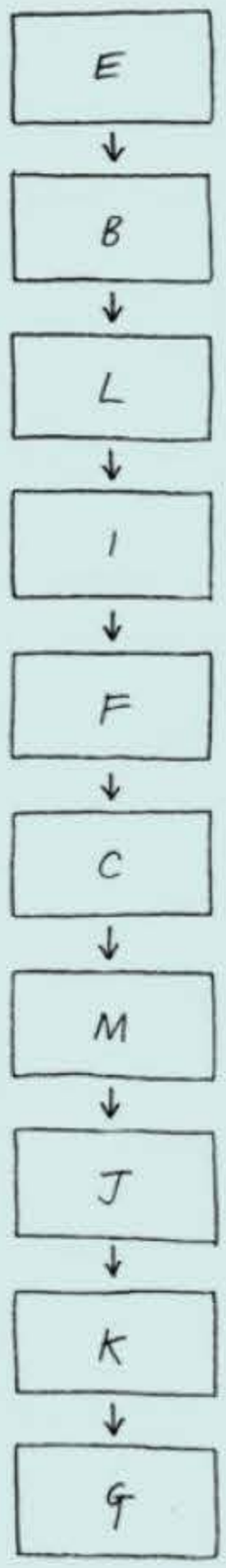


fig 3

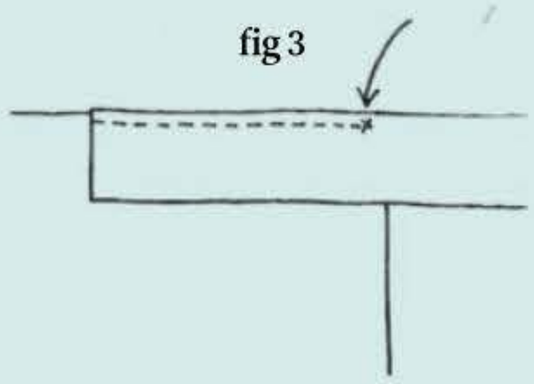


fig 4

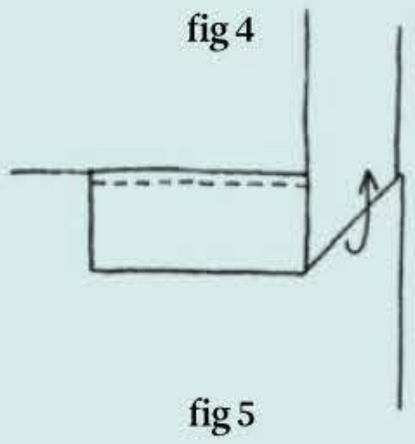
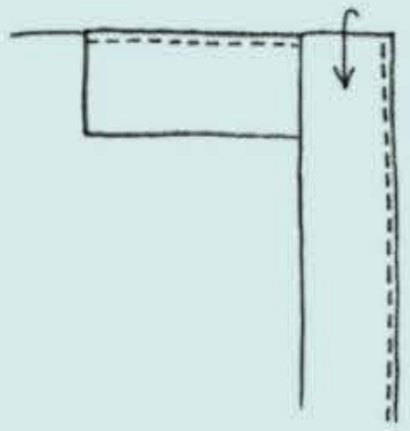


fig 5



Art Gallery Fabrics

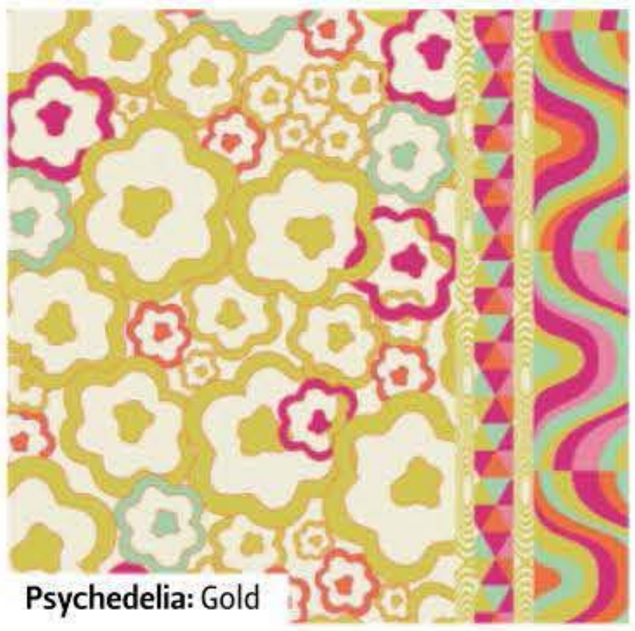
Art Gallery Fabrics was founded in 2004 on a desire to bring a chic and modern perspective to the quilting industry. With a "contemporary elegant" style, the company uses a talented design team to create a range of fabric collections. The Carnaby Street range, seen here and designed by founder Pat Bravo, is inspired by London in the swinging sixties, flower power and fashion. *www.artgalleryfabrics.com*

get the look

Swinging Sixties

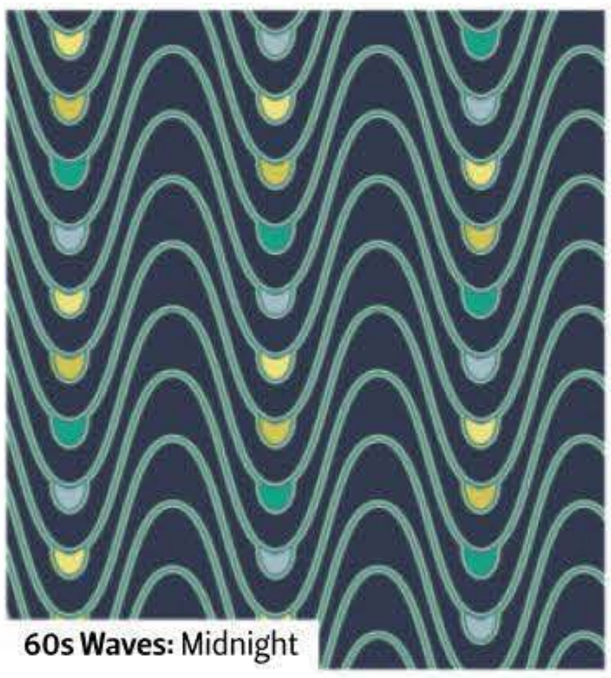
Carnaby Street by Pat Bravo for Art Gallery Fabrics is packed with groovy blooms and strong geometrics.

Go Go London: Lustrous



Psychedelia: Gold

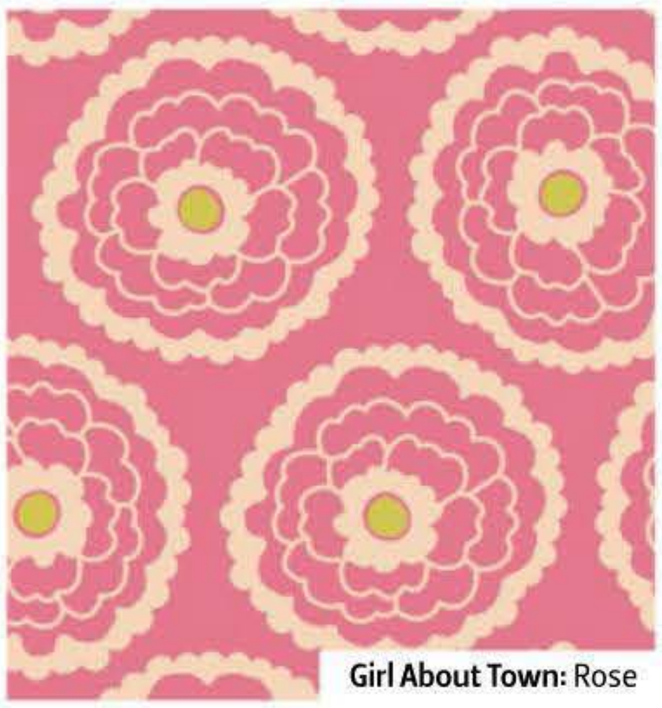
Retro Pop: Peach



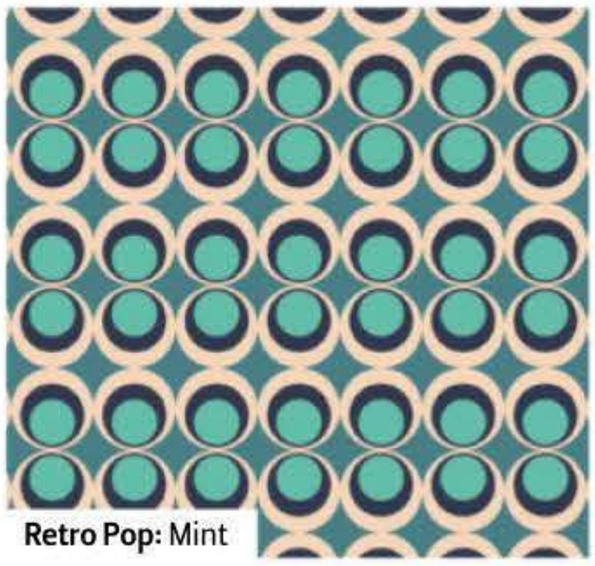
60s Waves: Midnight

Brit Boutique: Royal

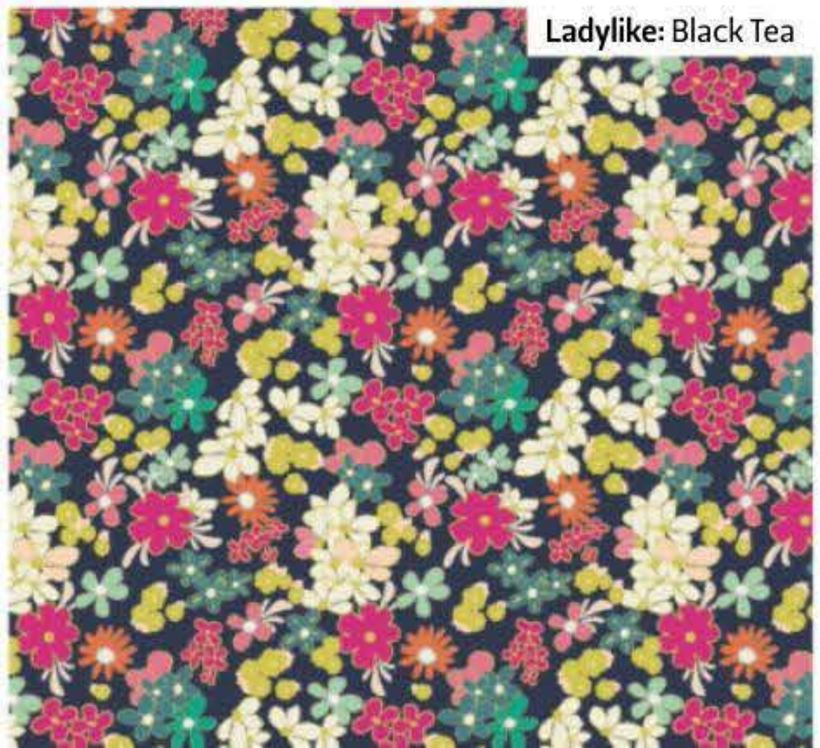
Ladylike: Green Tea



Girl About Town: Rose



Retro Pop: Mint



Ladylike: Black Tea

Groovy Vibes: Citrus

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Big Bold Blocks!

Bold colours give this quilt a wonderful scrappy, fun feel, with no two blocks alike. A truly unique item!

WHILE THE TRADITIONAL 'log cabin' style has been used for this design (using 'logs' of fabric to build a cabin around the central hearth, represented by the middle squares) the fabric selection is totally random. The result is a quilt that beginners and experienced quilters alike will find great fun to make – just choose the colours and start sewing!

The quilt is made up of a total of 30 blocks, each measuring about 30cm (12in) square when the quilt is completed. If you find you're pushed for time, tackle each block of this quilt individually. You'll enjoy watching your pile of fabric disappear as the pile of blocks grows.

You might want to wait until you've finished the quilt top before you choose the binding fabric, to see which colour from the blocks jumps out as the one you want to frame the whole design.

NOTES

Seam allowance: 6mm (¼in)
Finished size: approx 183 x 152cm (72 x 60in)

> TACKLE EACH BLOCK OF THIS QUILT INDIVIDUALLY – YOU'LL ENJOY WATCHING YOUR PILE OF FABRIC DISAPPEAR AS THE PILE OF BLOCKS GROWS

1 Press the fabrics for the patchwork. Cut strips 5cm (2in) wide. These will be added from the centre outward to make the block, so will range in length from 5cm (2in) at the centre to 32cm (12½in) at the edges. Decide on the arrangement of the strips.

2 Take one of the fabrics that will be at the centre of the block and cut across it at right angles to a length of 5cm (2in), giving a 5cm (2in) square. Cut the second centre square in a different fabric in the same way.

3 Pin the two squares right sides together and, join them on one side with a 6mm (¼in) seam (**fig 1**). Press the seam open.

4 Pin another length of fabric along one long edge of the pressed unit, RS together, and attach it in the same way (**fig 2**). Trim the edge level with the first pressed unit after sewing. Press the seam open.

5 Attach another strip across the two pieces just joined. Again, trim the edge level after sewing and press the seam open (**fig 3**).

6 Keep adding strips in the order shown (**fig 4**). Remember to press the seam open each time you add a strip, and measure the total width of the piece periodically to ensure that the seams are accurate.

7 When you have added the final strip, press the block, place it on the cutting mat, and trim to 32cm (12½in) square.

8 Repeat to make 30 log cabin blocks in the same way. Arrange the blocks in six rows of five blocks each. Sew the blocks together in horizontal rows, pressing the seams open each time, then sew the rows together to complete the quilt top. Press the quilt top well on the right side of the fabric.

9 Assemble the three layers of the quilt 'sandwich'. Using curved safety pins and starting in the centre of the quilt and working outward, pin through all layers to secure well, smoothing the quilt as you go.

10 Using a walking foot on your machine, if you have one, and a light-coloured thread, start at one corner of the quilt and sew a meandering (curving) line with wide twists diagonally across the quilt. The stitching ▶

YOU WILL NEED

- 4m (4yd) of an assortment of brightly coloured spotted, striped, floral, and geometric cotton print fabrics for the patchwork
- 2m (2yd) red-and-white floral cotton fabric, 60in (152cm) wide, for backing
- 188 x 158cm (74 x 62in) batting (wadding)
- 75cm (¾yd) plain red cotton fabric, 6cm (2½in) wide, for binding

For stockist details, see page 160

TOP TIP

Spray starch, available from the laundry section of the supermarket, is brilliant for taming small pieces of fabric. Spray it onto your fabric and press, and you'll find that even the tiniest pieces of fabric become a little rigid and therefore much easier to handle and sew.

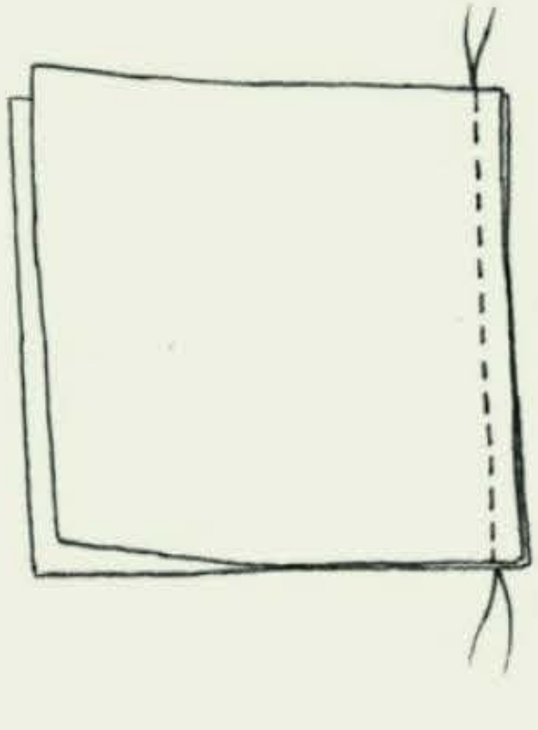

fig 1

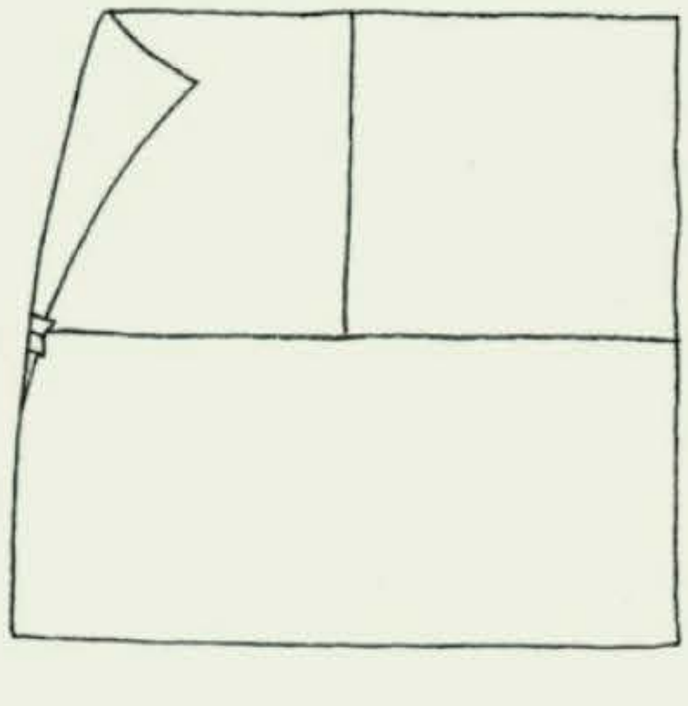

fig 2

should pass through the corner of each block. When the first diagonal row is completed, repeat for each diagonal row in one direction.

11 Starting from the opposite corner, repeat the process, making sure the quilt is smooth and unpuckered when one line of quilt stitching crosses another. Trim the backing fabric and batting (wadding) level with the quilt top if necessary.

12 Cut strips of binding fabric on the straight grain, 6.5cm (2½in) wide. You will need two strips measuring the same as the top of the quilt, and two measuring the same as the sides plus 2.5cm (1in). Bind the quilt using your preferred method.

A PASSION FOR QUILTING

Nicki Trench's eye for detail and colour is shown off perfectly in this bright and beautiful collection of designs. *A Passion For Quilting* (CICO Books, £12.99, paperback) contains 35 patchwork and quilting patterns, each designed to be straightforward yet with a contemporary twist, while appealing to beginners and experienced quilters alike. The book is split into four sections – Blankets & Quilts, Bags & Purses, Accessories & Gifts and Kitchen & Dining Room – and includes projects such as embroidered quilts, chair covers and more.

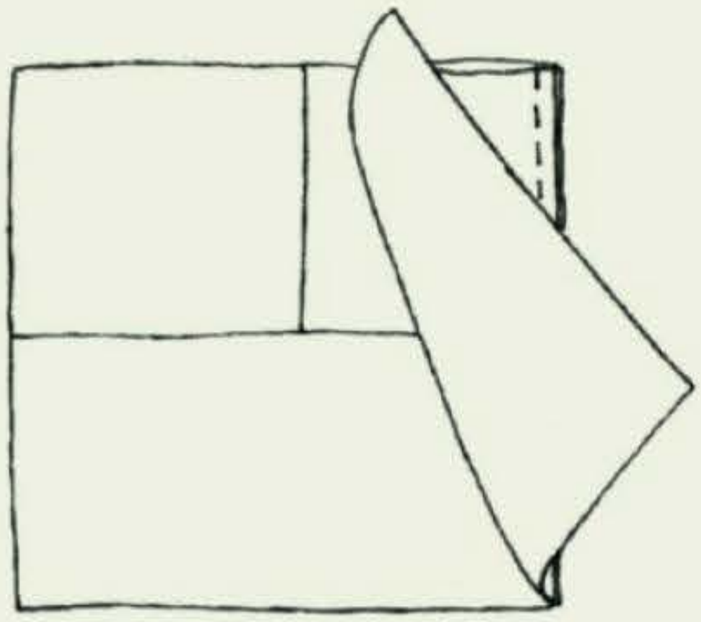

fig 3

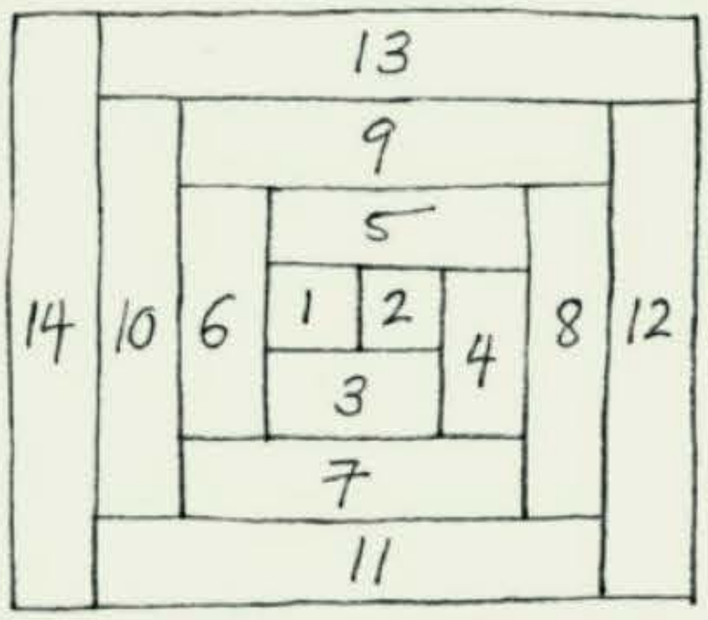

fig 4

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MACHINE APPLIQUÉ

Create stylish effects on your sewing machine with your choice of thread and stitches.

Machine appliqué is quicker to work than hand appliqué but you get quite a different effect. Obviously the appliqué shapes are more securely sewn on, but the machine stitches also give them a more solid edge so your finished piece will be less flexible. Also, it's harder to move more intricate shapes around your machine, so they can be difficult to work. And if you are appliquéing on to a large piece of fabric such as a quilt, then it can be more difficult to get it all under your machine.

Stitchers tend to prefer one method over the other, or choose the technique to suit the project. If your item or garment is going to have a lot of wear then you'll find that machine appliqué is the best option as it's more secure.

ATTACHING YOUR SHAPES

The easiest way to machine appliqué is by sticking your fabric shapes to your base fabric with a fusible web first. This will keep them securely in place, which is particularly important when you are moving the fabric round under your machine needle. For detailed instructions on how to appliqué shapes in this method turn to page 43.

Alternatively, you can simply cut out the shapes you want to apply then tack them securely in place before you stitch – the choice is yours!

CHOOSING THE THREAD

First decide what thread you are going to use to stitch your appliqué shapes into place. There is plenty of choice and to start with it's best to use a cotton or polyester thread in a colour that matches your appliquéd shape.

As you become more practised you can experiment with other threads such as metallic, iridescent, matching, contrasting or even invisible thread. Practise using these different threads on spare fabric first to see the different effects you can create. If you are using a contrasting thread then you need to be particularly careful with your stitching as it will show up much more on your finished piece. However, once you've mastered this, then the stitching can become an important and intricate part of your design.

STITCHING THE APPLIQUÉ

The most common stitch used for appliqué is a zig-zag stitch as it secures the shape into place without being too dominant. You need a fairly close zig-zag so the fabric won't fray, but not too tight or the stitching will be too dense. A stitch width between 1mm and 1.5mm wide is about right. Set the stitch length just above (not at) the satin-stitch setting, or between 0.5 and 1mm. Practise setting the stitch length and width on spare fabric until you are happy with the finished effect.

Using a clear presser foot, line up your appliqué shape in the middle of your foot, so that the needle will go into the fabric right at the very edge. Take a few very small straight stitches along the edge of the shape to secure the thread.

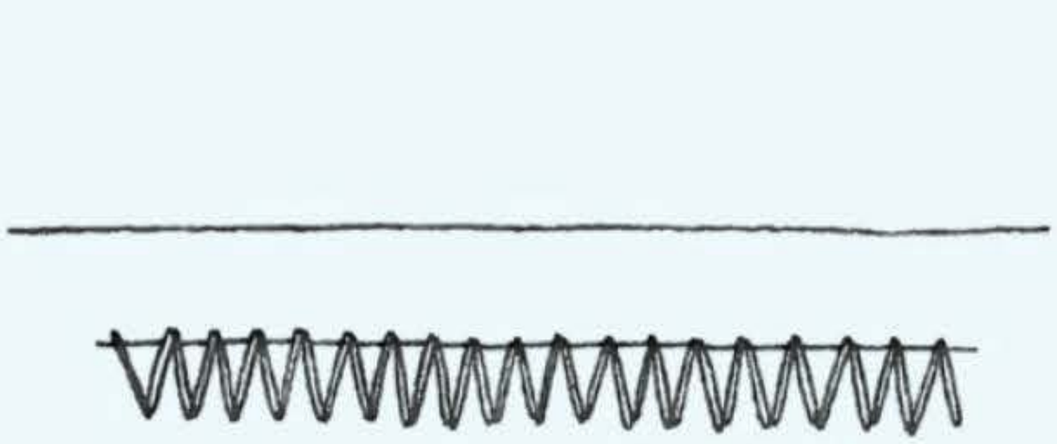


fig 1

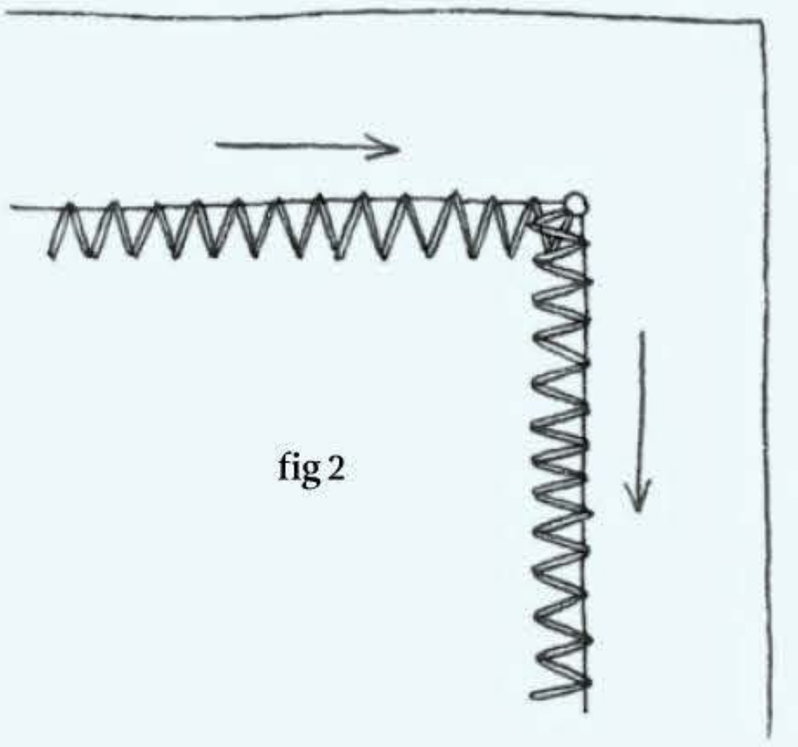


fig 2

Now stitch round the shape so that the needle goes into the fabric just outside the appliqué and into the fabric again just inside the shape. To finish off work a few stitches backwards to secure the thread (**fig 1**).

STITCHING CORNERS

If your shape has corners, manually place your needle right at the corner, in the main fabric. Lift your presser foot, pivot the fabric until it is aligned, then begin stitching again (**fig 2**).

STITCHING CURVES

On larger, more gradual curves, stitch slowly round the curves easing the fabric as you go to achieve a smooth line of stitches. On smaller or tighter curves, pivot the needle in the same way as for corners, but moving the fabric round just a little so you work round the curve gradually. A really good way of achieving smooth curves is to mark your shape with the twelve positions of the clock before you begin. Then as you are stitching, pivot the needle at each marked position for a smooth curved edge.

STITCHING INSIDE CURVES

Stop stitching at the first pivot point with the needle down in the appliqué fabric. Now raise the machine foot, move the fabric round slightly then stitch to the next pivot point. Continue in this way until you have stitched the whole curve (**fig 3**).

STITCHING OUTSIDE CURVES

Work these in the same way as the inside curves, above, but pivot with the needle down in the base fabric instead (**fig 4**).

USING STABILISER

Stabilisers are really important in machine appliqué, especially when you're using a zig-zag stitch. This is because it keeps your stitches even and stops the fabric pulling out of shape. There are various types of stabiliser you can buy, so ask for advice at your local fabric shop.

Cut a piece of stabiliser to a little larger than your appliqué shape, then place it beneath the base fabric that you are appliquéing onto.

Stitch the appliqué fabric on to this fabric in the usual way.

Once you have finished all your stitching you can remove the majority of the stabiliser from beneath, leaving just the stitches stabilised.

USING DIFFERENT MACHINE STITCHES FOR APPLIQUÉ

Depending on your type of sewing machine, may have many different stitches which you never normally use. Machine appliqué is a great chance to try them out. Always practise first on a scrap of fabric, and experiment with different stitch lengths and widths.

ZIG-ZAG STITCH

This is the most common appliqué stitch, but you can actually achieve two very different looking stitches depending on your settings. Closely worked stitches will look similar to satin stitch, whilst more open stitches will produce a more defined zig-zag effect.

BLANKET STITCH

Some sewing machines have up to five blanket stitches so you need to choose the one you like the most. Make sure you work it so it just overlaps the edge of the appliqué shape, in the same way as you would with a zig-zag.

STRAIGHT STITCH

Though this won't stop your fabric from fraying as much as a zig-zag stitch, it does gives a more homespun frayed edge to machine appliqué. It works well with jersey/knit fabrics.

OTHER STITCHES

Try all the stitches on your machine to see which you like the best. If you have any decorative stitches like scalloped or wavy stitches, these can look really effective.

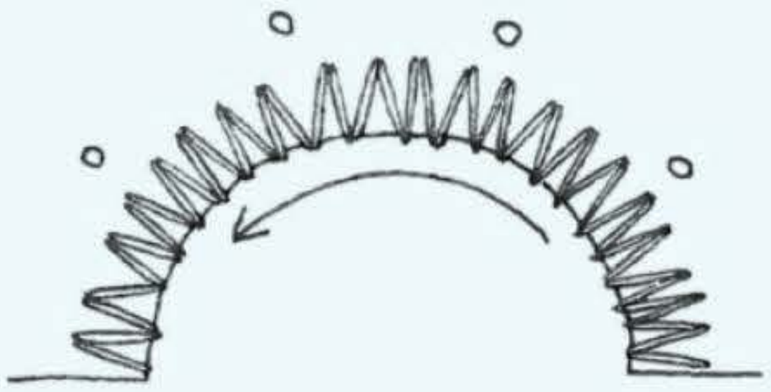


fig 3

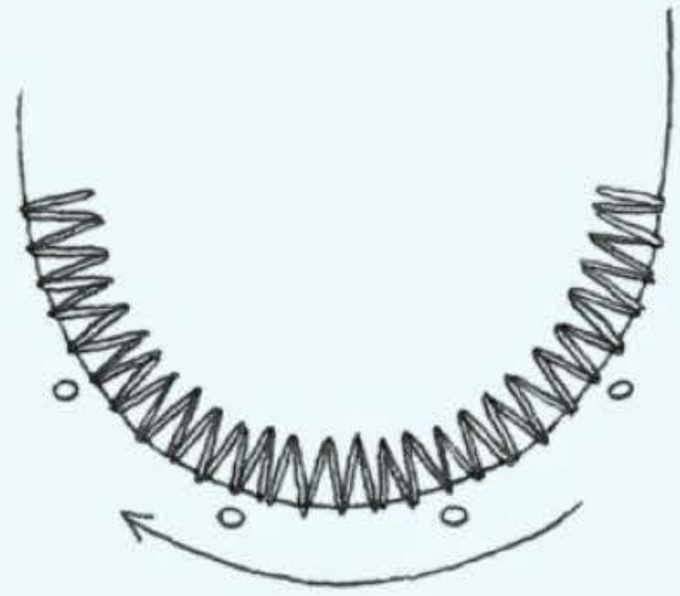


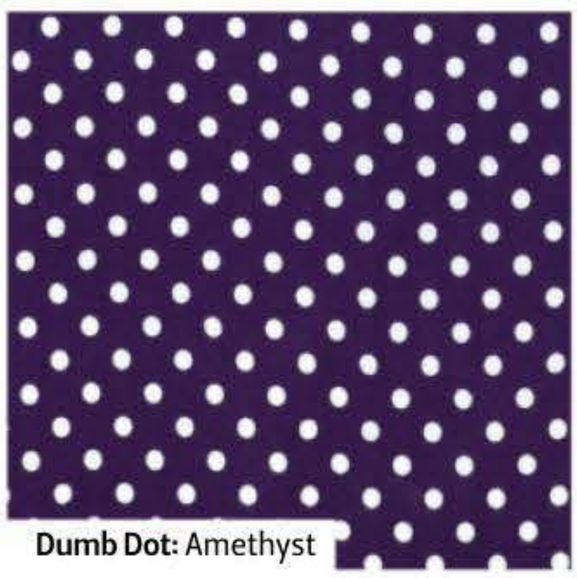
fig 4

get the look

Dots & Spots

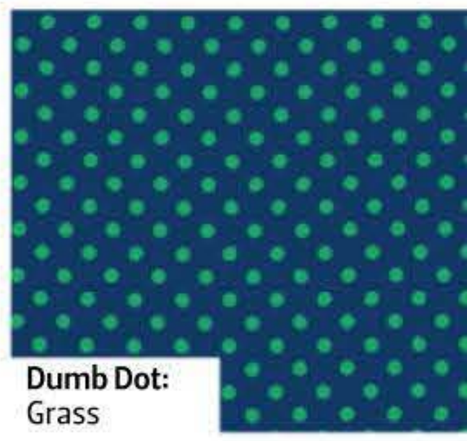
Go dotty for spots with Michael Miller's Dumb Dot, Disco Dot and Pinhead prints.

Dumb Dot: Tangerine

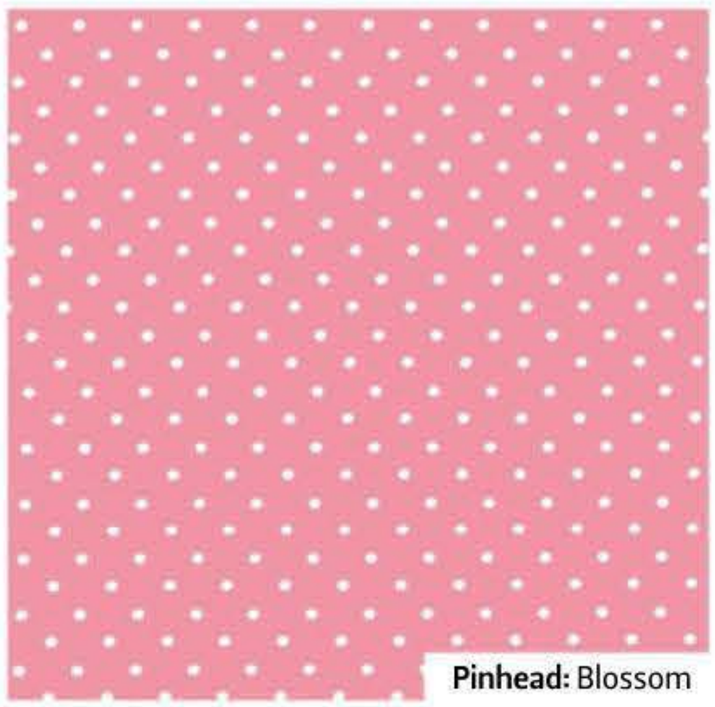


Dumb Dot: Amethyst

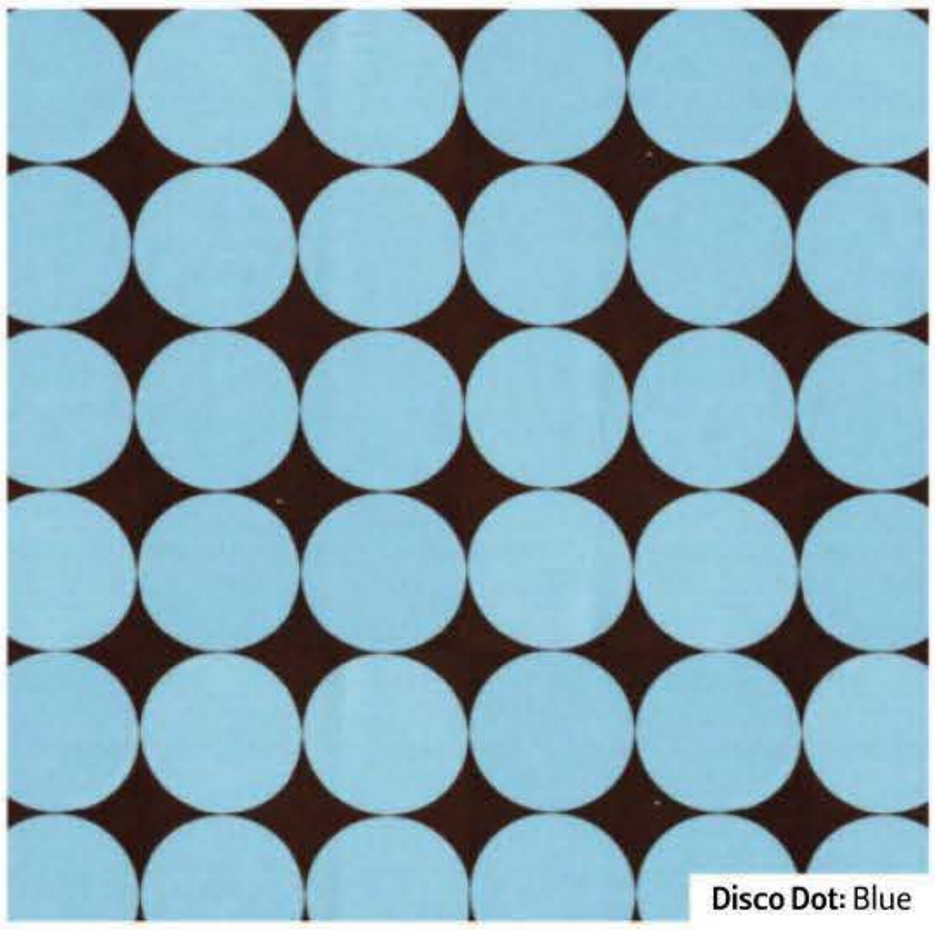
Disco Dot: Blossom



Dumb Dot: Grass



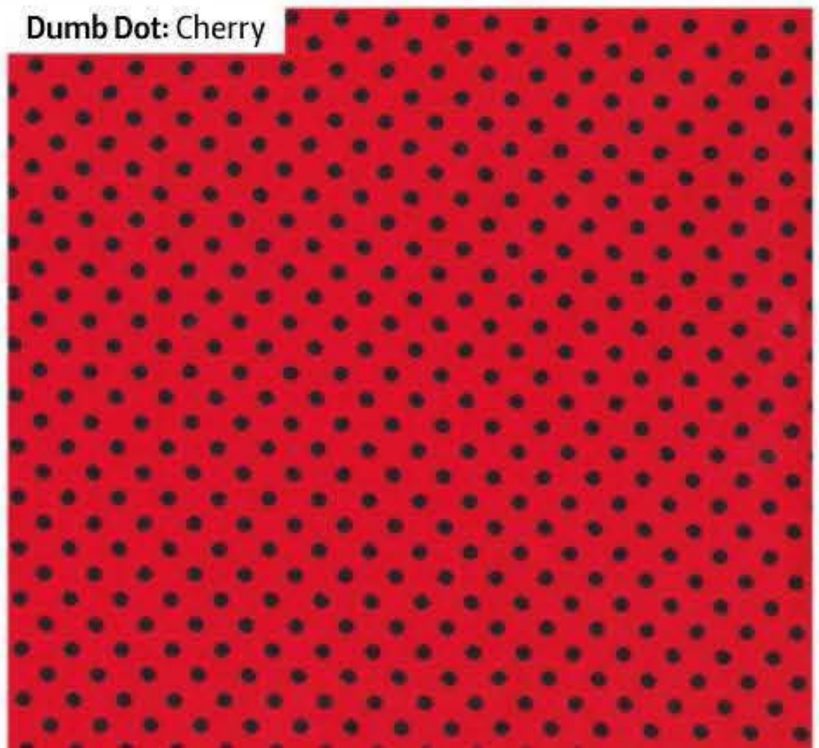
Pinhead: Blossom



Disco Dot: Blue

Pinhead: Leaf

Disco Dot: Caribe



Dumb Dot: Cherry

Pinhead: Citrus

Dresden Plate Rug

A classic quilting block gets a modern twist with this spot-on patchwork rug.

YOU WILL NEED

- Fabric scraps (five co-ordinating colours)
- 10 x 112cm (4 x 44in) fabric (for binding)
- 50cm (20in) of batting
- Spray adhesive
- Jute rug, 61 x 91cm (24 x 36in)
- Heavy cotton thread
- White acrylic paint
- Small paintbrush

For stockist details, see page 160

BRIGHTEN UP A plain jute rug with some of your favourite fabric prints and this glorious Dresden plate design. Modelled on a traditional quilting block, this project uses appliqué to create bright and beautiful pieces that add pops of colour to a neutral rug. The painted circles are an easy and unusual way to bring the whole design together, reflecting the centres of the 'plates' across the whole rug.

This project is a great way to show off your favourite scraps of pretty fabrics. Don't worry if your cherished cut-off seem too precious to stand on, though – this design would also make a gorgeous wall hanging.

DRESDEN PLATE BLOCKS

1 Using templates A, B, and C and co-ordinating fabrics, cut 13 petal pieces from each template. These pieces will create one large, one medium, and one small Dresden plate block.

2 Fold one petal in half, right sides together, and stitch across the top. Clip the folded corner and press the seams open. Then turn the petal right side out and press (**fig 1**). When you press, align the top point with the centre of the bottom edge of the petal. Consistency in this alignment will ensure that all petals match up when sewing them together to complete the Dresden plate block.

3 Repeat step 2 for all the petal pieces.

4 With right sides together, stitch two prepared petals along one side. Press open the seam. Repeat to complete each Dresden plate block (**fig 2**).

5 Cut a square of batting slightly larger than each block. Apply fabric spray adhesive to the back side of each pieced block and place them onto the corresponding batting piece. Pin the layers together.

6 Trim away the excess batting around each Dresden plate block. Once cut, carefully trim again around the petal points of the batting so it is slightly smaller than the pieced blocks.

7 With co-ordinating fabric, cut a binding strip on the bias that measures 3.2 x 89cm (1¼ x 35in). Fold the strip in half. Pin the strip to the patchwork layer of each block along the round centre edge (**fig 3**). Stitch the binding.

8 Cut out the excess batting from the centre of the Dresden plate block. Fold the binding strip over the edge of the circle and to the back. Stitch in the ditch – between the binding and the petals – to secure.

9 Apply fabric spray adhesive to the quilt block and place it onto the rug. Reinforce the placement with pins, and, using heavy cotton thread, hand sew the block in place using a slipstitch. Repeat with the remaining Dresden plate blocks.

FINISHING

10 If desired, paint circles in the middle of the blocks with white acrylic paint, and also scattered across the rest of the rug as you wish.

11 Depending on the size of your finished rug, complete the project by adding a matching binding strip to the edges.

STASH HAPPY PATCHWORK

This cheery, colourful book is full of projects guaranteed to bring a smile to your face. From a patchwork Panda Bolster to an adorable Little Sweetheart Dress, it really will help you make the most of your fabric stash with 25 beautiful projects. Create new twists on old favourites, and fill your home with texture and patterns. *Stash Happy Patchwork* is written by Cynthia Shaffer and published by Lark Crafts, £12.99.

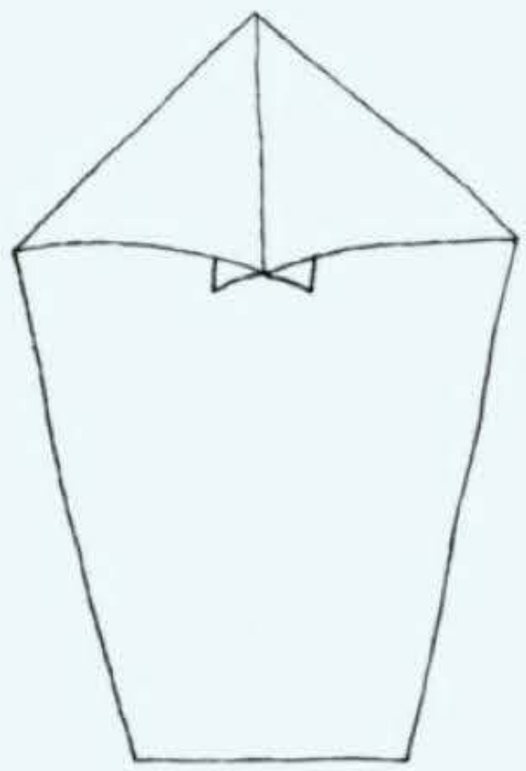


fig 1

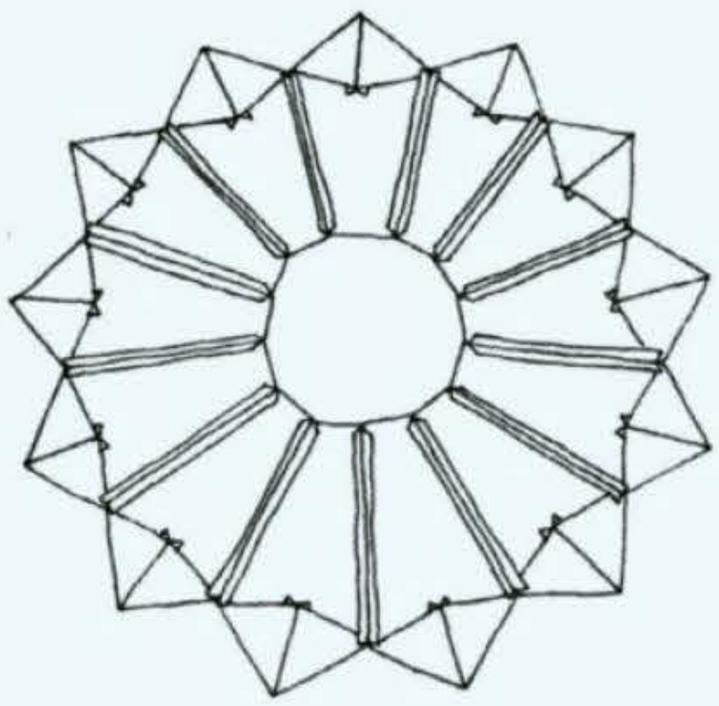


fig 2

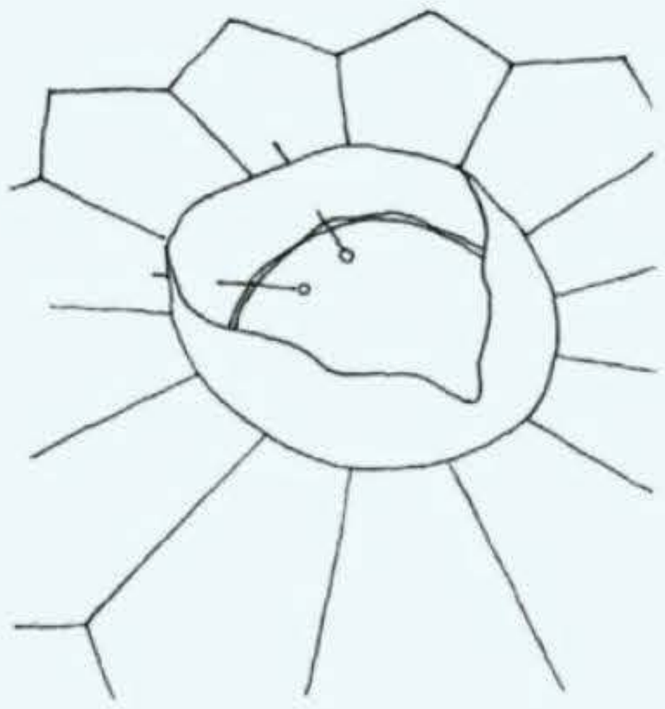
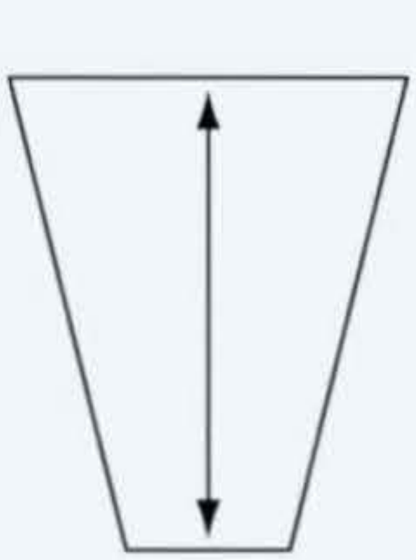


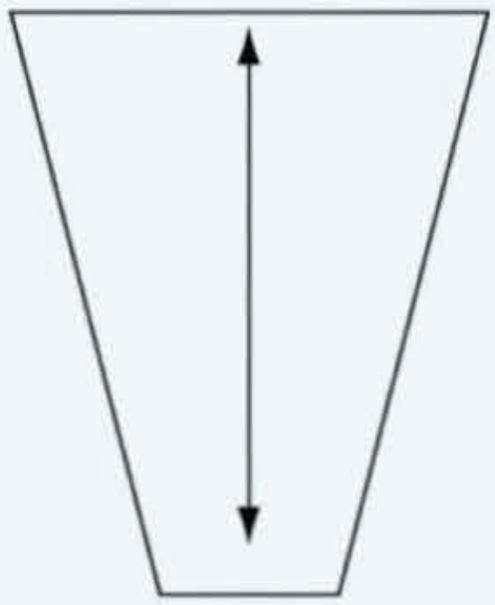
fig 3

DRESDEN PLATE RUG

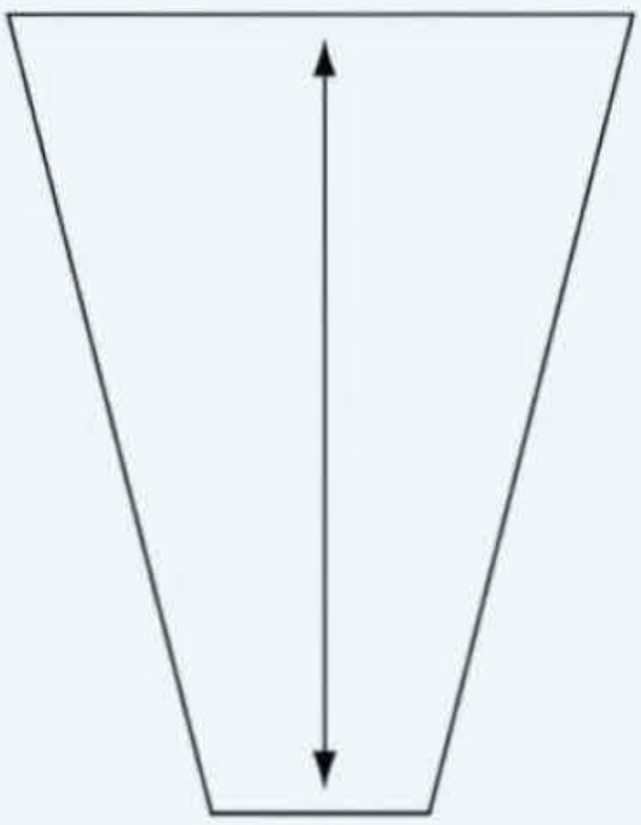
Enlarge templates by 200%



Template C



Template B



Template A

Expert GUIDE

SEWING FILLED SHAPES

Don't be nervous – if you can sew, you can create beautiful stuffed toys and homewares.

Making three-dimensional stitched items or filled shapes is just an extension of your other sewing skills. You need to be able to cut out fabric pieces accurately then stitch them together and stuff them. Sewing neat seams and working small hand stitches then embellishing with embroidery is really all there is to it! Follow these simple instructions and ideas to help you make gorgeous stuffed animals, decorations or items for your home.

CUTTING PATTERN PIECES

You need to make sure you cut out all your fabric pieces accurately before you begin. If you are following a pattern from a book or magazine then the pieces will be printed there. Check first to see if a seam allowance has been added. In most cases there will be but if not then make sure you add your own – 1.5cm (½in) is about right but remember to be consistent. Trace each pattern shape or cut it out if you are using pre-printed pattern paper.

PINNING INTO PLACE

Pin each pattern piece to your fabric. Make sure you look at the grain lines printed on the pattern. If they don't have them then think logically about which way each piece will face. This is particularly important if you are using a patterned fabric as the pattern should run in the same direction when you join up all the pieces. If you need to match a pattern then think about this when you are pinning (**fig 1**).

CUTTING THE FABRIC

Cut out each shape carefully and either keep the pieces pinned to the fabric until you stitch or label them carefully.

STITCHING TOGETHER

Following the instructions given with the pattern, stitch each piece together using a consistent seam allowance. It's really important to remember that you will need to leave a gap in one seam so you can turn your assembled fabric pieces right sides out for stuffing. It's best to leave this gap along a straight seam if possible as that will be easier to sew back up accurately with a small slip stitch (**fig 2**).

TRIMMING AND CLIPPING SEAMS

Once you have stitched the seams, clip curves and snip corners to help them lie flat when you turn back right sides out. For more intricate shapes, trim allowances to 6mm (¼in) so they don't add too much bulk to your finished shape (**fig 3**).

EMBELLISHING

If you are going to embroider or embellish your filled shape then in some cases it's best to embroidery each fabric piece before they're assembled. For other projects you should embroider them before filling but

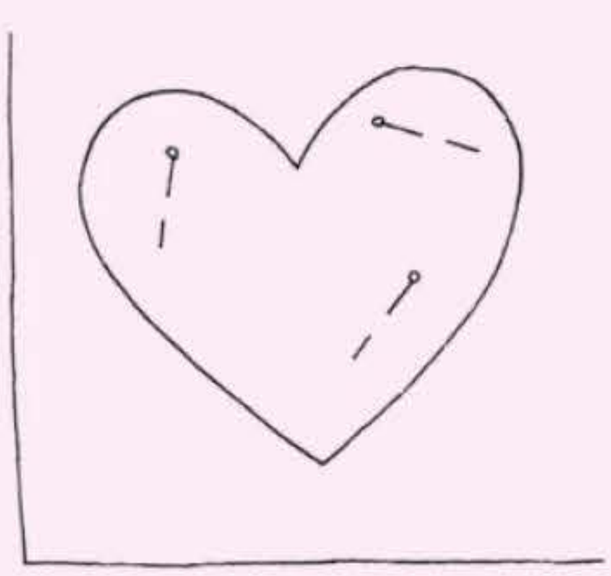


fig 1

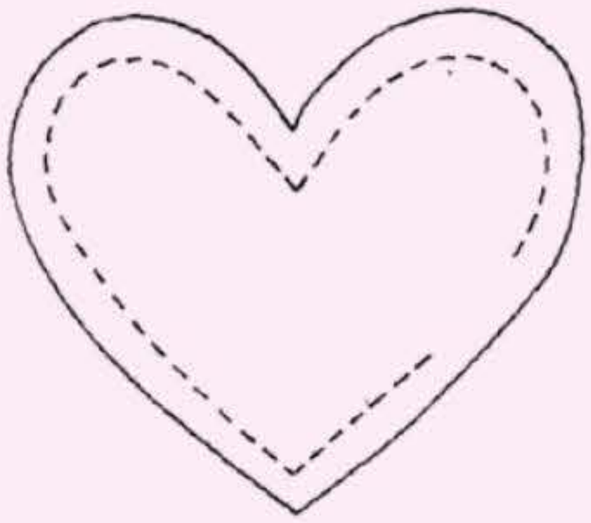


fig 2

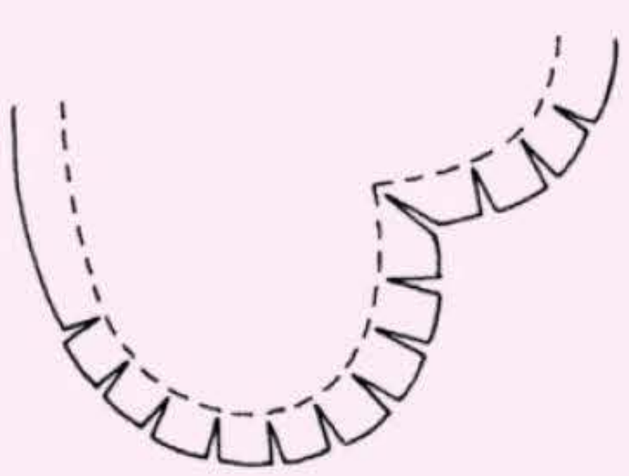


fig 3

after joining the fabric pieces together – particularly if the embroidery is worked over the seams. Your pattern should advise on which is the best order to work in.

Sometimes you need to add these stitches after you have filled the shape, particularly if you want to use them to sculpt the piece. For example, if you are making a fabric doll, you can embroider the features, fingers and toes on with back stitches through the filling as well. This pulls the fabric into the correct shape to create definition and is excellent for creating body features.

PRESSING

As you stitch each seam, press it as you go for a neater finish. If it's too fiddly to do this with an iron then simply fingerpress the seams open instead. To do this, support the seam inside with one hand then open the seam and run a moistened finger of the other hand along the seam. Leave to dry before turning right sides out. Alternatively, you can make a pad from a folded tea towel and put this under the seam to press it with an iron without creasing the rest of the fabric.

TURNING OUT

Once all the seams are stitched, trimmed and pressed you can turn your finished piece right sides out. If there are any corners, push these out into a point gently with a pin, but take care as the snipped seam allowance could fray and show on the right side.

FILLINGS

Normally you would use polyester toy stuffing, but there are other choices:

Dry, uncooked rice is ideal for doorstops.

Polystyrene beads are good if you want to make a flexible, bean-bag type effect.

Use dried lavender or pot pourri to mix with your filling, or if it's a small shape then lavender on its own will create a fragrant piece that's perfect for hanging on your coat hangers.

Sawdust is the perfect choice for stuffing pincushions, or use fine sand to help keep pins and needles sharp.

Use embellishments as you work to add personality and definition.

HOW TO STUFF

If you are using soft toy filling then gently tease the stuffing apart before you push it in. Don't just add dense lumps of filling or the finished effect will be bumpy. To push the filling into narrow areas and points, use a rounded tool such as the end of a paintbrush or wooden spoon – don't use a pointed tool, as it could break the stitches.

If you are using one of the other fillings then it's best to pour it in. Roll a piece of paper into a funnel and stick it with tape. Push the narrow end of the funnel into the gap in your filled shape and pour in your filling (**fig 4**). A small teaspoon can also be used for smaller shapes.

Pin the pressed edges of the gap closed, then slip stitch together. Make sure you make these stitches particularly small if you are using rice or sawdust (**fig 5**).

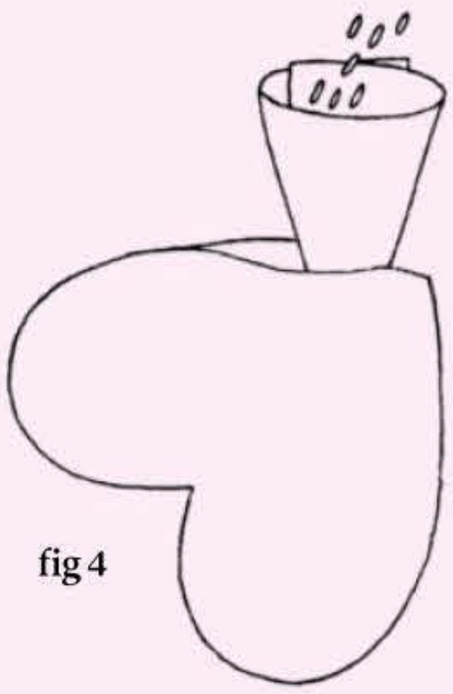


fig 4

fig 5

TOP TIPS

If your filled shape is going to be a cushion in a particular shape such as a heart, then you could insert a zip on the back for closing if you prefer. Just make a pattern for half the cushion including a seam allowance for the zip.

Pink Piggies

These adorable fleece piglets by
Jo Carter are perfect for the young
or the young at heart.

YOU WILL NEED

- Pink cotton/fleece, 65 x 65cm (25 x 25in)
- Piece of elastic approximately 5mm (¼in) wide and at least 14cm (5½in) long
- Black and pink embroidery thread
- Ribbon, 2.5cm (1in) wide and 65cm (25½in) long (optional)
- Polyester filling

For stockist details, see page 160

CUTTING LIST

From the pink fleece:

- Cut 1 middle face
- Cut 2 side face
- Cut 4 ear
- Cut 1 snout
- Cut 2 back head
- Cut 2 stomach
- Cut 2 back body
- Cut 1 base
- Cut 2 top arm
- Cut 2 under arm
- Cut 2 leg
- Cut 2 feet
- Cut 1 tail

NOTES

Seam allowance: 5mm (¼in)
Arrows on the pattern pieces indicate pile/print direction (if applicable) for marking and cutting out.

Take time to get the face details just right for the cutest piggie expression!

ANYONE WITH SMALL children will know that while accessories and homewares are all very well, nothing inspires a huge, light-up-the-room grin like a handmade toy, crafted especially for them. Homemade gifts give something special that can never be matched by shop-bought toys, presenting your love, time and creativity, as well as – hopefully – a love and passion for hand crafting.

These adorable piggies by Jo Carter aren't just for children, of course – they look cute on any shelf and would make a great present to show someone just how much they mean to you. Sewn from a soft fleece fabric, they're just asking for a friendly cuddle, and the perfect placement of ribbon and embroidered features gives each pig bags of personality. And don't worry if you'd prefer to use cotton – our instructions detail any changes that need to be made to allow for a woven fabric, so you're still sure of a perfect finish.

PREPARE THE FACE

1 Begin by taking two (mirror image) ear pieces and with right sides together, place one on top of the other and sew together around the edge. Snip off the excess fabric before the seam at the tip of the ear and, if making from cotton or a similar stretch-free fabric, clip the seam allowance on the curves (this isn't necessary with fleece). Turn the ear the right way out and fold the open edge over and then baste the fold in place (**fig 1**). Repeat for the other ear.

2 Sew up the dart at the top of the middle face. Then, RS together, line up one side of the middle face with the corresponding side face piece and sew together starting from the bottom snout edge and sewing upwards toward the top of the face (**fig 2**). Repeat for the other side, again sewing from the bottom, up to the top of the face. Beginning at the snout edge each time ensures a more even finish and appearance to the face.

3 The snout now needs to be sewn around the curved opening formed by the three face pieces. With right sides together, line up the bottom mark on the snout piece with one end of the curved opening and from this point sew the snout around the curve, taking care to match up the markers indicating the joins for the middle face to keep the seam on course (**fig 3**). If using a cotton fabric or something similar that does not stretch, clip notches into the seam allowance of the snout piece. ▶

> "THESE ADORABLE PIGGIES WOULD LOOK GOOD ON ANY SHELF AND ARE JUST ASKING FOR A FRIENDLY CUDDLE!"

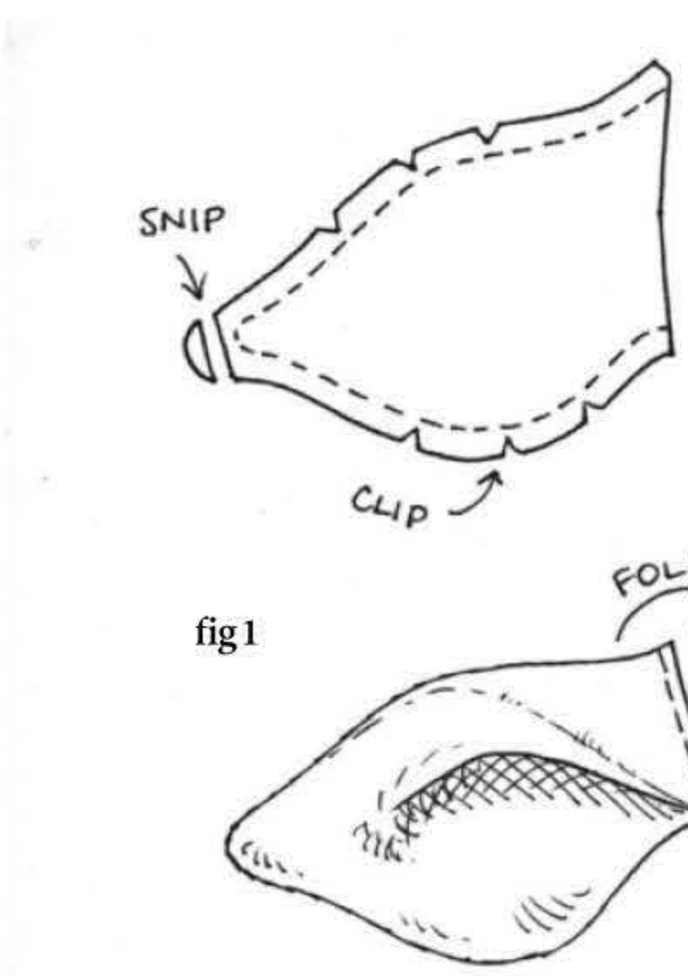


fig 1

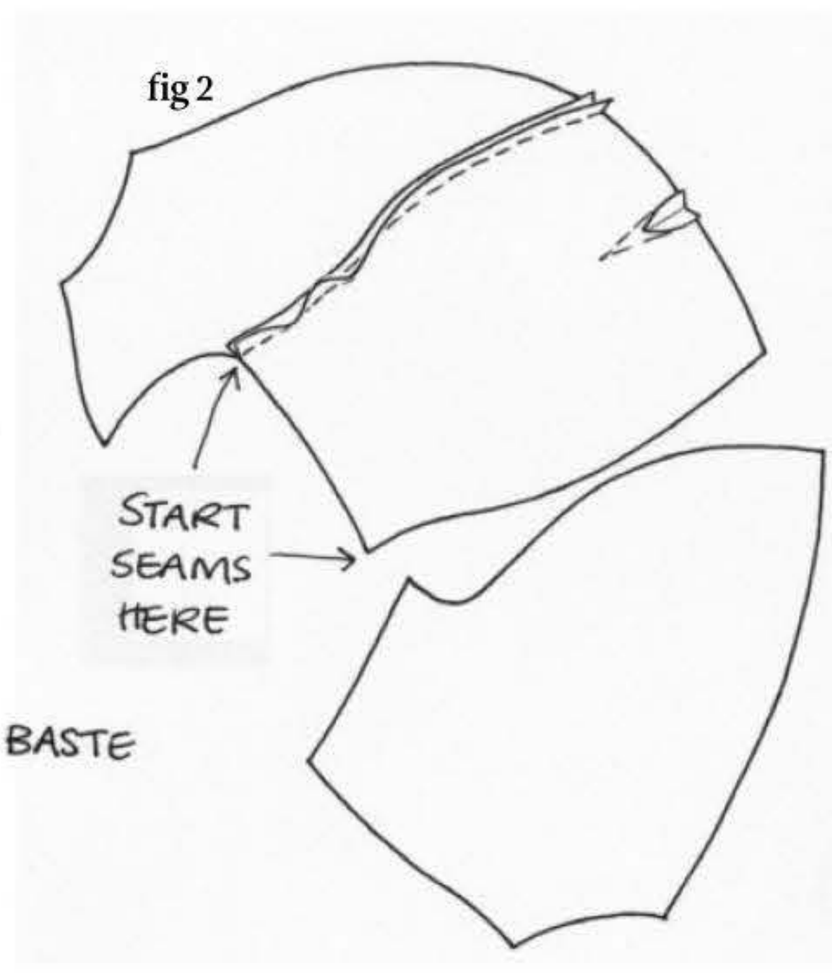


fig 2

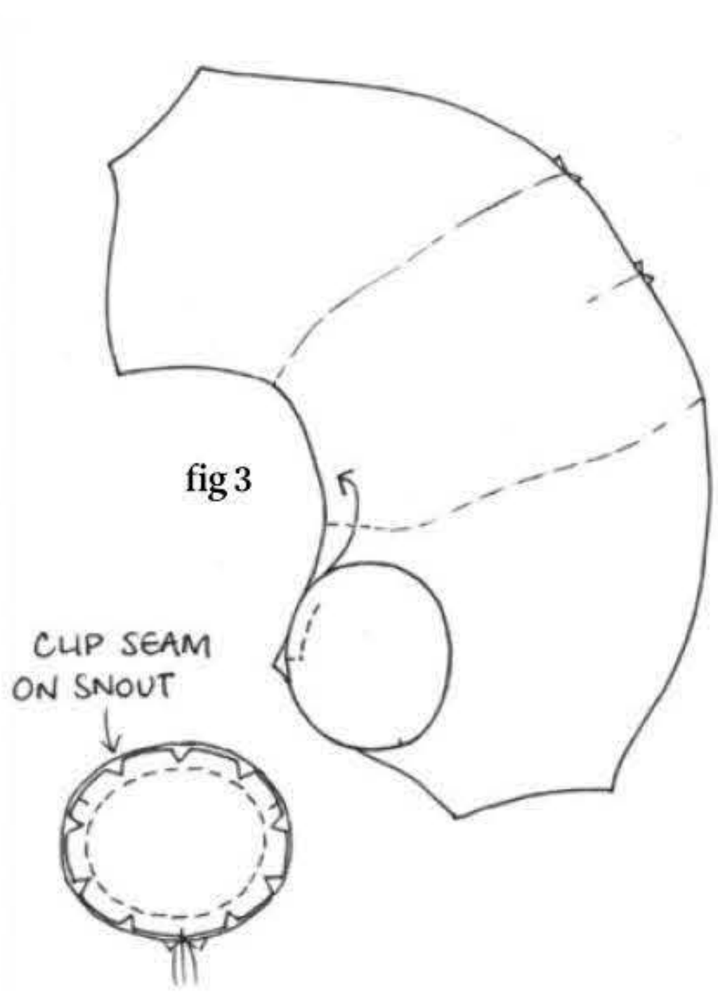


fig 3

Put your best foot forward with our adorable fleece piglets.

4 With the folded front-side of the ears against the RS of the face and the fold facing outward (toward the neck edge) position them on the face and baste in place (**fig 4**).

5 With RS together, sew closed the lower face (**fig 5**).

ASSEMBLE THE HEAD

6 With RS together, place one back of head piece on top of the other. Starting at top of back of head, sew a short seam 6cm (2½in) down along the back to hold them together (**fig 6**). Finger press this seam open.

7 With RS together, align the central dart in the top of the face with the short seam made in step 6. Starting at this point sew down along the side of the head to the bottom neck edge (**fig 7**). Return to the top and starting here, sew up the other side of the head. Making this seam in two parts like this, by lining up and working from the central top point each time, helps to ensure an even, proportioned finish to the head.

ASSEMBLE THE BODY

8 With Right sides together sew a stomach piece to its corresponding back body piece from under the arm down to the bottom (**fig 8**). Repeat for the other side of the body.

9 Ensuring that the under arm is facing the correct way for the side of body it is being attached to, right sides together sew it to the now joined stomach and back body around the 'V' shaped opening (**fig 9**). Repeat for the opposite side.

10 Position a top arm, with right sides together, against its corresponding under arm and sew around the sides of the arm leaving the top open. Clip the seam allowance at the centre of the 'trotter' (**fig 10**). Repeat for the opposite side.

11 Close the darts at the top of each arm. With RS together, join both sides of the pig's body together along the stomach (**fig 11**).

MAKE THE LEGS

12 With RS together and the foot positioned on top of the leg piece, line up the marker on the bottom of the foot with the bottom corner on one side of the leg. Sew foot around end of leg, ending at the point the seam began. Sew up the length of the leg from the top to the back of the foot, leaving the top end open. Clip the seam allowance in the centre of the foot and turn the leg the right way out. Stuff the leg keeping the top of the leg only lightly filled and baste it closed (**fig 12**). Repeat for other leg.

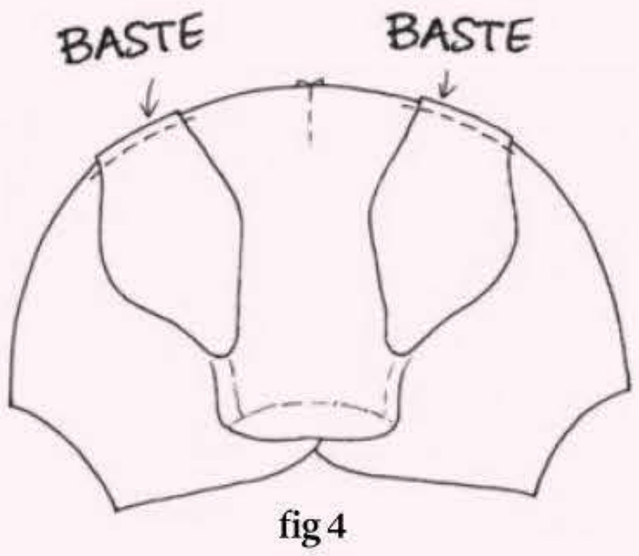


fig 4

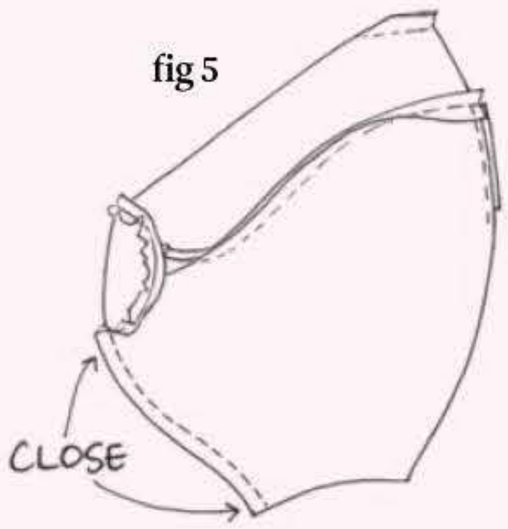


fig 5

fig 6

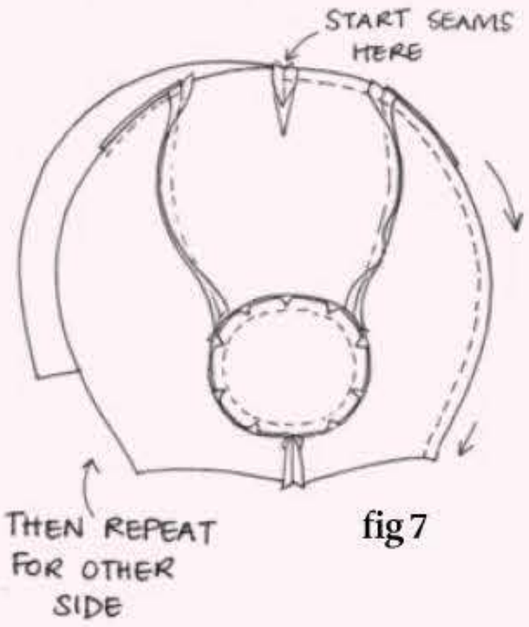


fig 7

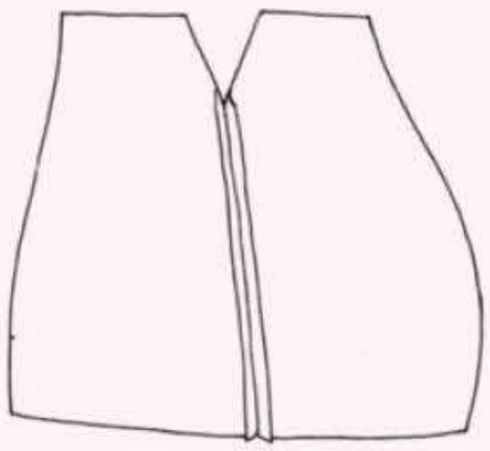


fig 8

fig 9

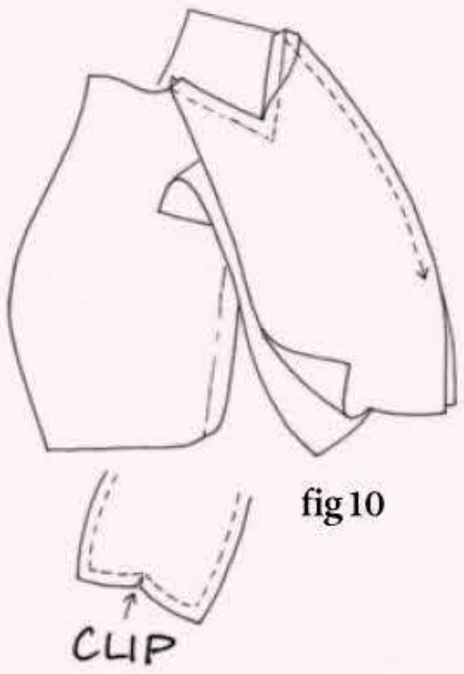


fig 10

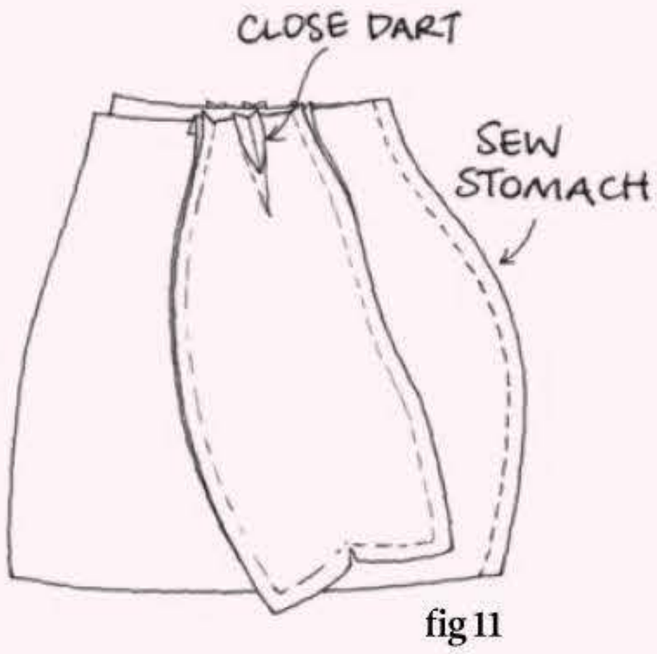


fig 11

13 With front of legs positioned against RS of stomach, baste both in place (**fig 13**).

COMPLETE THE BODY

14 Right sides together, with the base piece on top of the back body, match up the back marker on the base with the bottom corner of the back body. Start the seam at this point and sew the base around the bottom of the pig's body (**fig 14**). Check that the seam is on course during sewing by ensuring that the markers on the base are matching up with the seams and legs on the body. This is one of the most difficult steps within the pattern as this seam sandwiches the pre-stuffed, and therefore cumbersome, legs in place and less confident sewers may prefer to tack the base on before machine sewing.

ATTACH THE HEAD

15 Right sides together, line up the central seam in the neck edge of the face with the central seam at the top of the stomach. Start at this point and sew outwards to the end of the back of body pieces (**fig 15**). Complete other half of the neck seam by again beginning in middle and sewing outwards, this time in the opposite direction.

MAKE THE TAIL

16 Fold the tail piece over along the length so that the right side is on the inside. Position the elastic, running lengthways, on top of the tail with one end of the elastic slightly overlapping the end of tail. Begin sewing at this end of the tail at the fold and sew along the short edge, oversewing the elastic a few times to make sure it's well secured and then down along the side, leaving the other short end open. Clip off the seam allowance at the corner on the closed end of the tail. Turn the tail the right way out – the end of the elastic should protrude out of the open end. Holding the closed end of the tail in one hand, with the other pull the free end of the elastic taut. Between two fingers pinch the open end of the tail shut, clamping the taut elastic in between too (wind the stretched elastic around the hand pulling it until your fingers are close enough to pinch the end of the tail). Machine sew the end of the tail and taut elastic together, closing the end of the tail. At this point the unstretched tail should have approximate length of 5.5cm (2¼in). Snip off the excess elastic (**fig 16**).

> "LESS CONFIDENT SEWERS MAY PREFER TO TACK FIRST"

FINISHING

17 Return to the short seam in the back of the head made in step 6, and continue it to the bottom of the head so that the head is closed but leave the back of the body open. Now fit the tail into the bottom of the pig's back and sew it in place leaving the majority of the back open to allow for turning and stuffing (**fig 17**).

18 Turn the pig the right way out, stuff with polyester filling and then hand sew the pig closed along the back.

19 Using pink thread stitch two French knot 'nostrils' onto the pig's snout and a bellybutton onto the stomach. Using black thread, embroider simple round eyes onto the face. When the second eye is completed, before securing and cutting off the thread, take the needle through the face back to the first eye and then back again to the second eye. Pull lightly on the thread to draw the eyes together slightly, shaping the face and giving it a little more character, secure the thread and cut off. Add thin eyebrows to give the face a little more expression. Tie a bow around the neck (**fig 18**). ▶

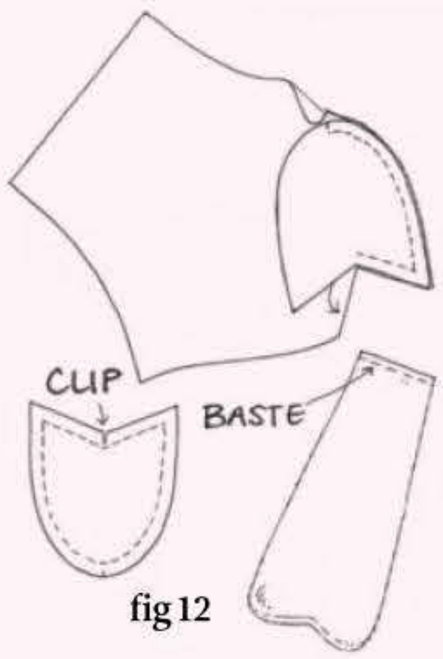


fig 12

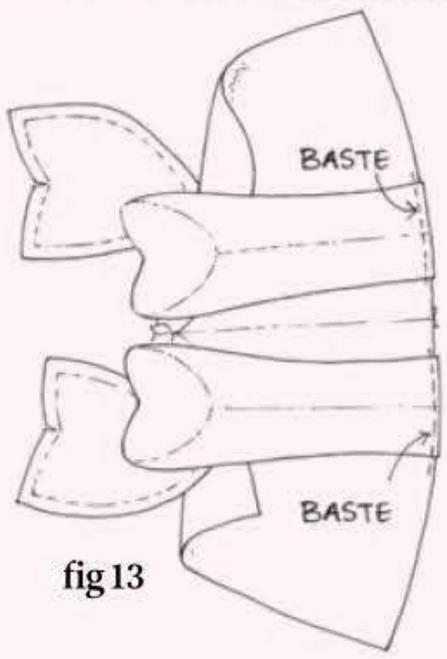


fig 13

fig 14

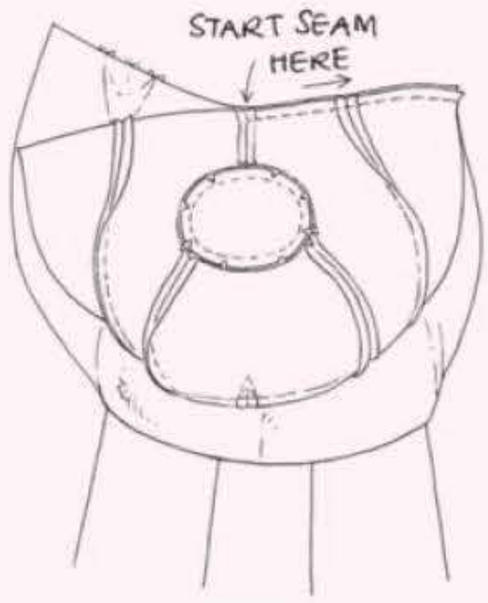


fig 15

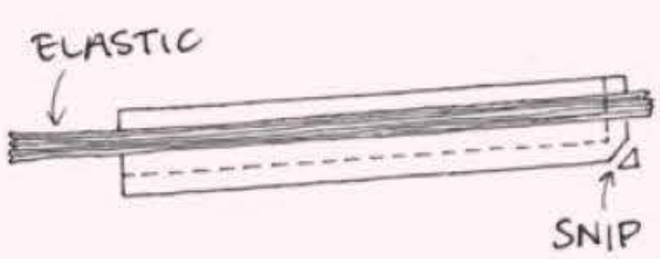
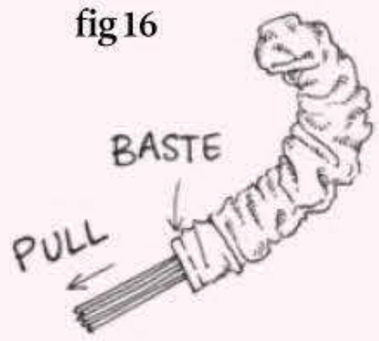


fig 16



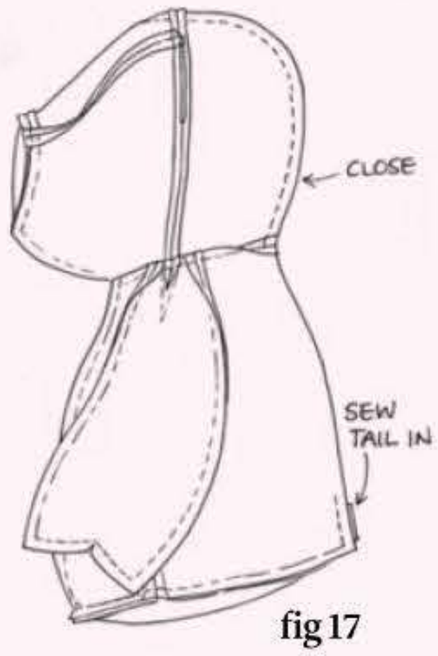


fig 17

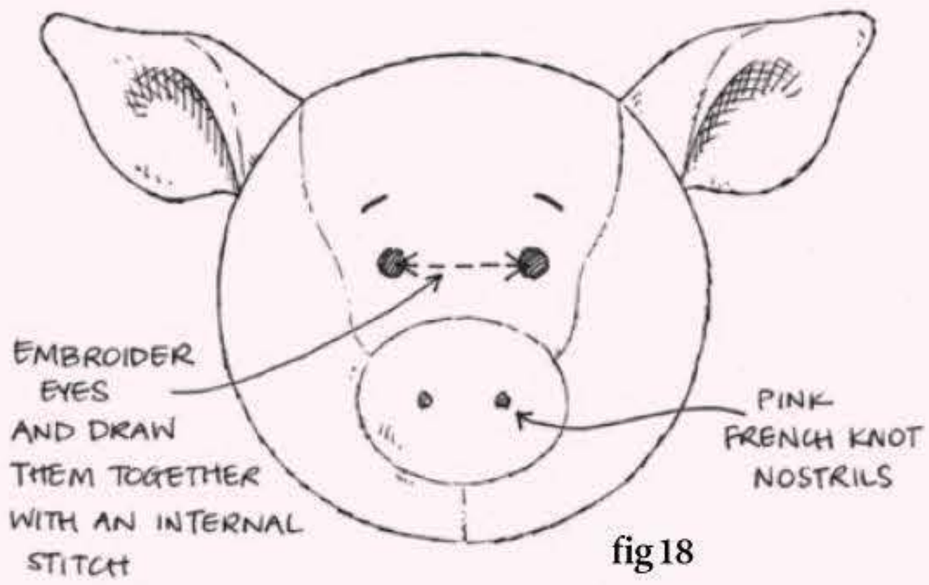
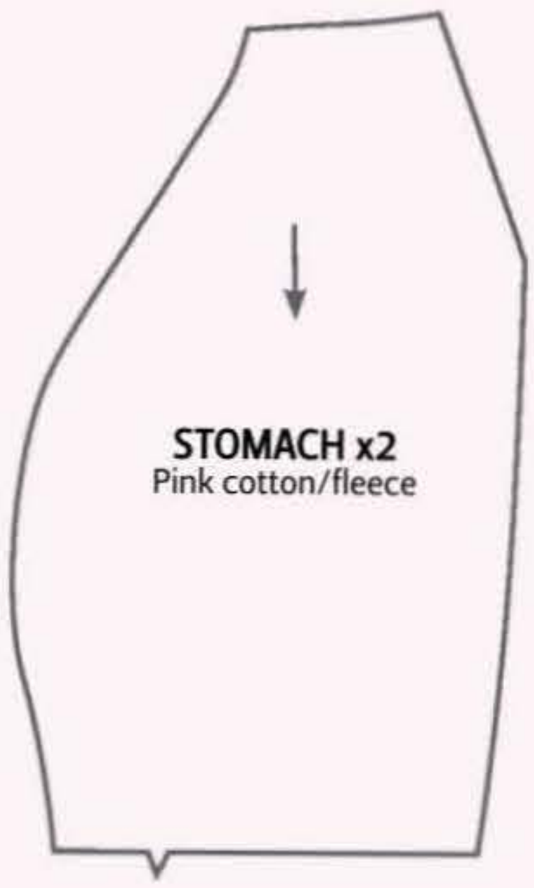
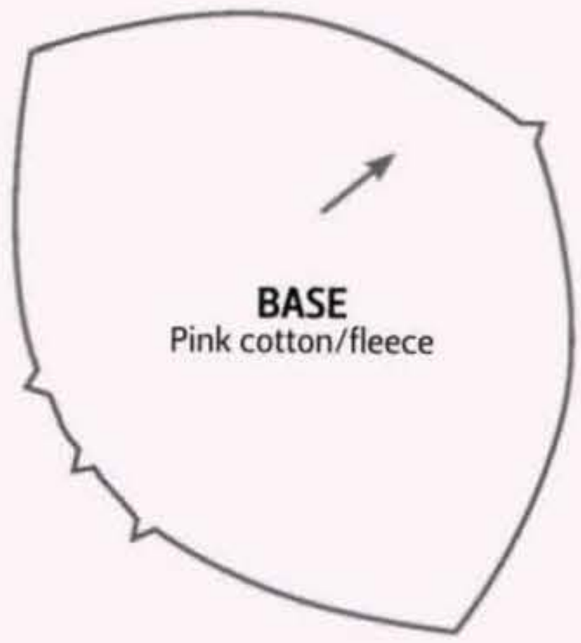


fig 18

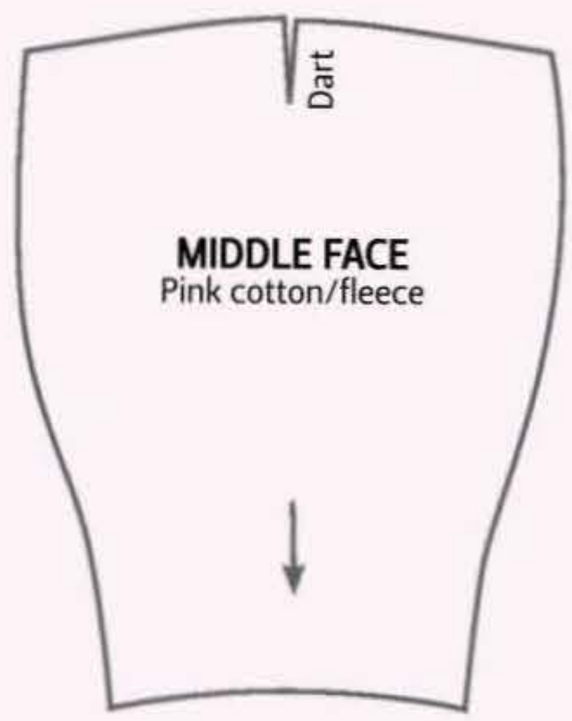
PINK PIGGIES

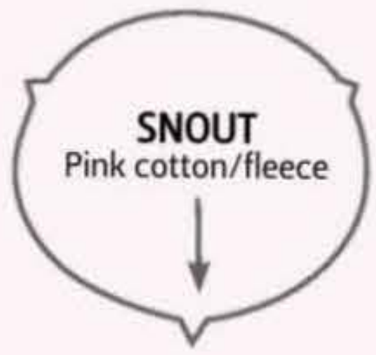
Enlarge templates by 200%

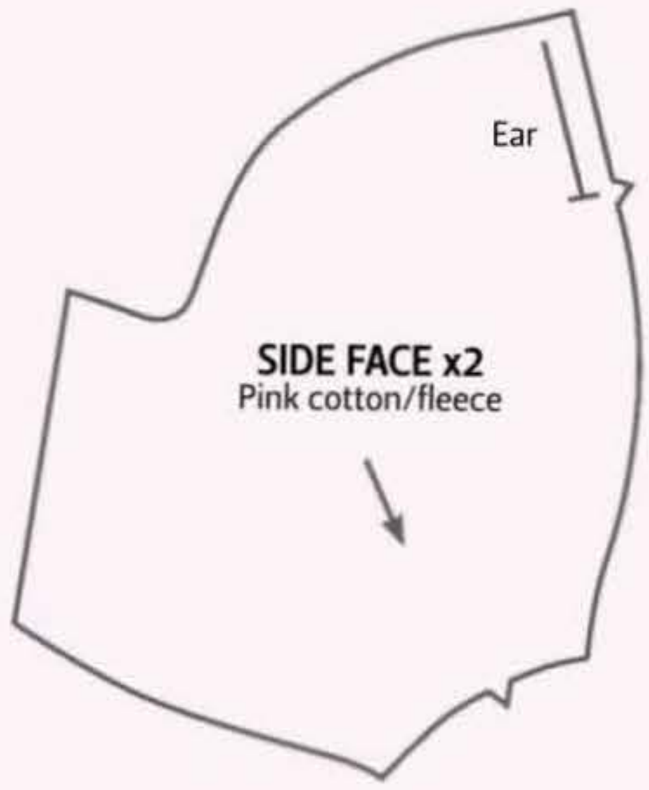




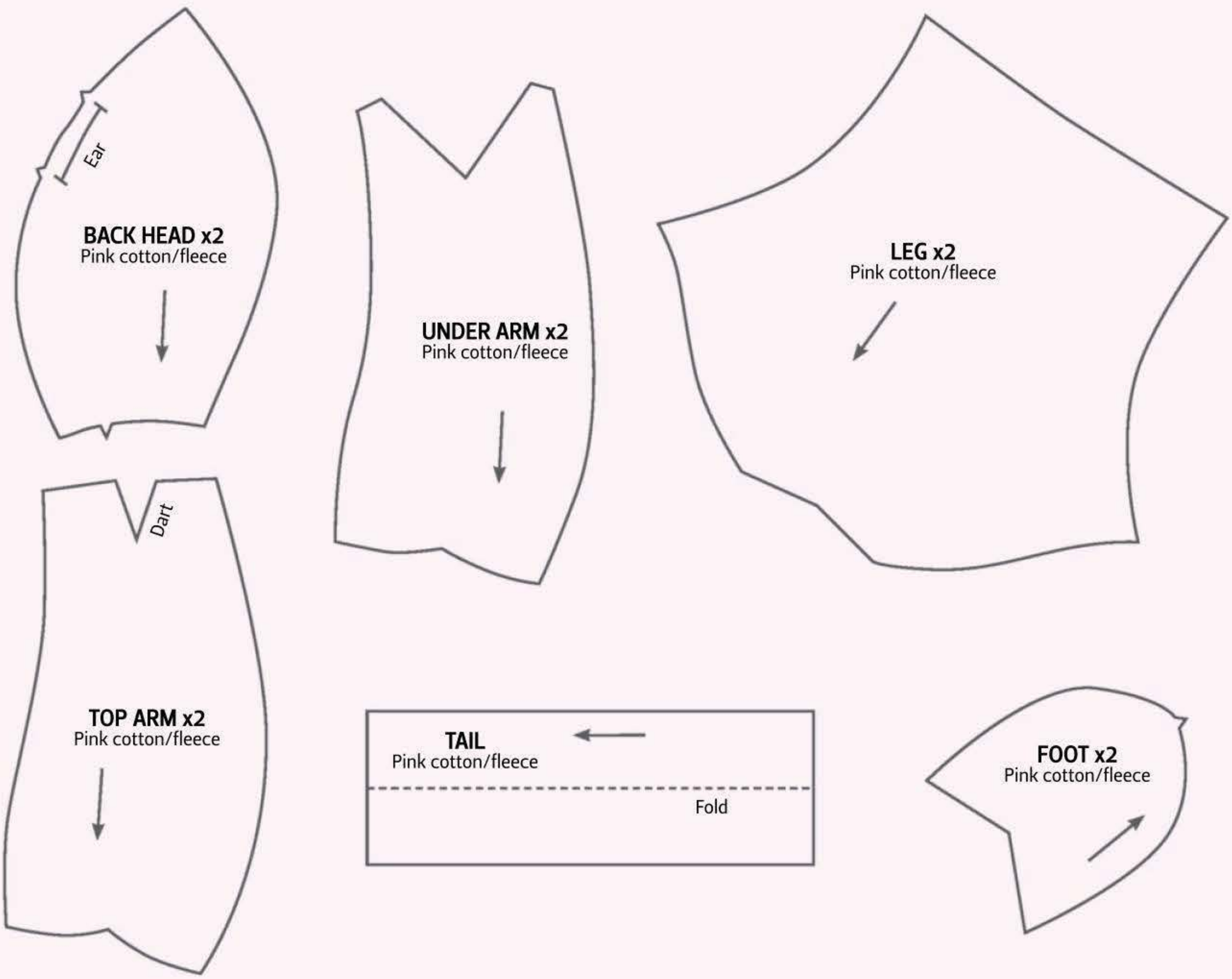
"HOMEMADE GIFTS GIVE SOMETHING SPECIAL THAT CAN NEVER BE MATCHED BY SHOP-BOUGHT TOYS – YOUR LOVE, TIME AND CREATIVITY"







Try different fabrics for a variety of looks and effects.



Libby Doll

Every girl adores a Liberty print outfit, and Libby the doll is no different.

Photography © Kristin Perers
Illustrations © Lucinda Ganderton

DELIGHT ANY YOUNG – or old! – girl with this adorable doll. Libby is perfectly crafted, with a stylish jacket that co-ordinates with her shoes, all setting off her amazing dress. Of course, everyone adores Liberty prints, and Libby has a whole dress made of them – lucky thing!

Libby is a straightforward make, with a simple body shape. And because her dress and jacket are removable – the dress is fastened at the back with velcro, and at the top with pretty ties – you can always make her a whole wardrobe of different prints and colours! It's a perfect project for using up your precious fabric scraps.

Extra touches like her brown woolly hair, buttoned shoes and delicate embroidered face really do bring Libby to life, so spend a bit of time to get these right.

Do please note, though, that because of the small parts, like the shoes, this toy is not suitable for a child under 4 years.

CUTTING OUT

1 Copy the templates on page 143, enlarging them by 200%, and cut out the body, arm, leg, bodice, jacket and shoe pattern pieces as follows:

2 **From cream linen fabric for the doll:**
Two bodies
Two legs, cut on fold
Two arms, cut on fold

3 **From assorted Liberty Tana Lawn:**
For the dress bodice
Two 25 x 20cm (10 x 8in) rectangles
For the dress skirt
Two 6 x 50cm (2¼ x 19¾in) rectangles
Two 8 x 50cm (3¼ x 19¾in) rectangles
Two 10 x 50cm (4 x 19¾in) rectangles
Two 12 x 50cm (4¾ x 19¾in) rectangles
For the dress sash
One 8 x 40cm (3¼ x 15¾in) strip

4 **From felt:**
For the jacket
Two 25 x 15cm (9¾ x 6in) rectangles
For the shoes
One 5 x 12cm (2 x 4¾in) rectangle.
Fuse the felt to a Scrap of Liberty Tana Lawn using Bonding web, following the manufacturer's instructions.

MAKING UP THE HEAD AND BODY

5 Referring to the template, mark the features, hairline and points A, B and C on one of the body pieces. With right sides together, pin and tack both body pieces together. Machine stitch twice around the head and shoulders from points A to A, to reinforce the seam line. Stitch both side edges between points B and C, working a few reverse stitches at each end to secure the seams (**fig 1**).

6 Trim the seam allowance around the head and shoulders back to 5mm (¼in). Clip a row of small triangles into the seam allowance, cutting to within 2mm (⅛in) of the stitch line. Space the notches 5mm (¼in) apart along the neck curves and 1cm (⅜in) apart around the head. Press back the seam allowance at the side and bottom edges, at both front and back (**fig 2**).

SEWING THE LEGS AND ARMS

7 Re-fold the arms and legs and tack the edges together. Machine stitch these seams, leaving a 1cm (⅜in) seam allowance, once again reinforcing both ends. Trim the seam allowance back to 5mm (¼in), tapering it down to 3mm (⅛in) at the narrow ends (**fig 3**).

8 Turn all the parts right side out, using a knitting needle to push the limbs through. Ease out the seams by rolling them between your fingers and thumbs so that the stitches lie at the outside edges.

YOU WILL NEED

- 50 x 30cm (19¾ x 12in) cream linen fabric
- 100g polyester toy filling
- Stranded cotton embroidery thread in black and pink, for the eyes and mouth
- Small ball of brown wool yarn, for hair
- Elasticated hair band, for the hair
- Selection of remnants of Liberty Tana Lawn in different prints
- 7cm (2¾in) strip of velcro, 5mm (¼in) wide
- 30cm (12in) square felt
- 12 x 5cm (4¾ x 2in) fusible bonding web
- Three small buttons
- 20cm (8in) square of card

For stockist details, see page 160

> "IT'S A PERFECT PROJECT FOR USING UP ALL YOUR PRECIOUS FABRIC SCRAPS"

9 Stuff all the doll parts firmly with the polyester toy filling, again using a knitting needle to push the filling right down into the hands and feet, and up through the neck into the head. Make sure that the neck is stuffed well before filling the body, to ensure that the head will stay upright. When all the parts are stuffed, tack across the top edge of the arms and legs, with the seam lines at the centre back.

10 Slip the top of the legs into the bottom of the body. Pin and tack in place, then hand stitch with matching thread, sewing securely through all the layers. Insert the top of the arms into the side openings of the body, in line with the shoulders. Pin and tack before stitching in place as for the legs (**fig 4**). ▶

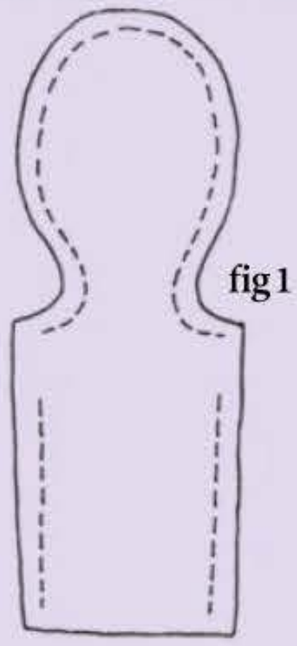


fig 1

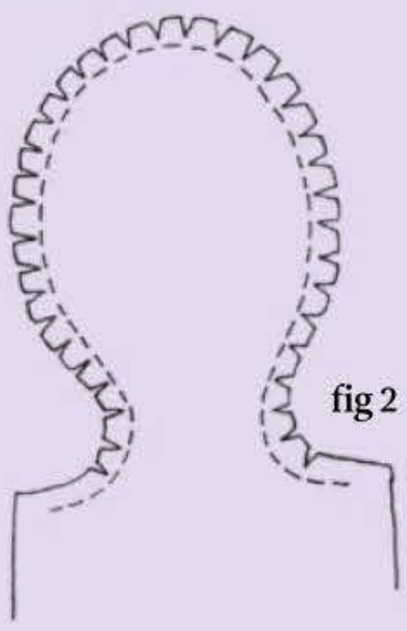


fig 2

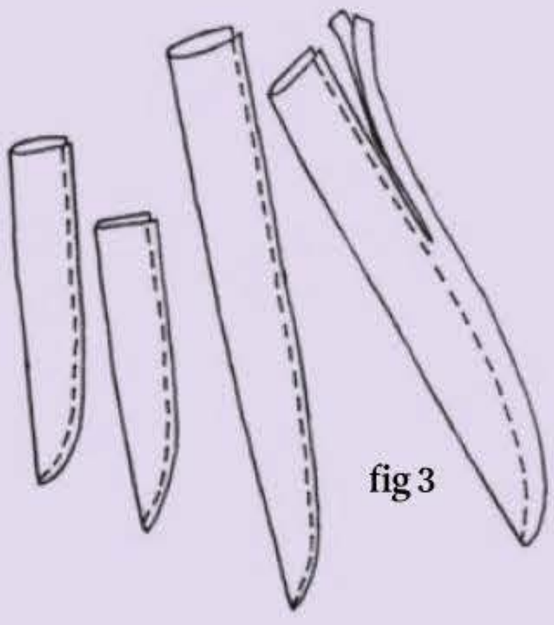


fig 3

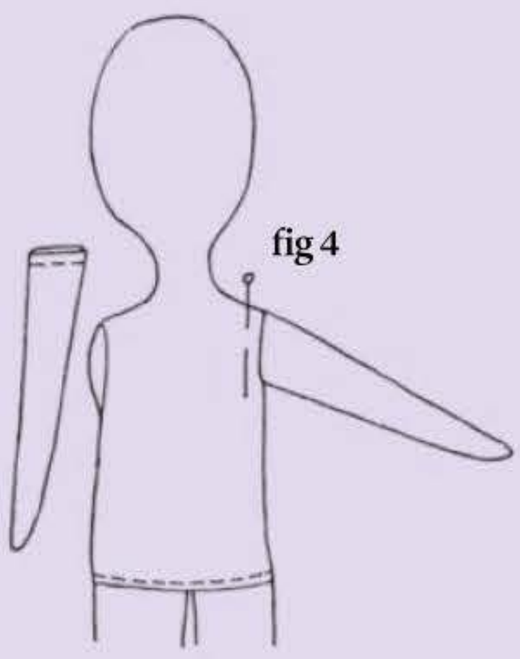


fig 4

EMBROIDERING THE FEATURES

11 Using black cotton embroidery thread, sew a 4cm (1½in) vertical stitch for each eye, with a shorter stitch at a slight angle either side for the eyelashes. Her mouth is a short pink straight stitch caught in the middle with a small stitch to turn it into a smile. Add a little blusher for rosy cheeks.

MAKING THE HAIR

12 Draw a 15cm (6in) line along the centre front of the card and wind the wool yarn evenly at right angles to the line until it is covered by the yarn. Cut a length of yarn from the end and thread it through a tapestry needle. Sew a row of backstitches along the centre line: this will be the doll's parting. Cut through the yarn along the centre back of the card (**fig 5**).

13 Pin the stitched line along the parting and down the centre back of the head. Using matching thread, hand stitch in place along the parting. Stitch the front hair in place either side of the face with a strand of wool and trim to the same length all round. Gather it into a low pony tail and secure with a hair band. Divide this in two just above the band and tuck the loose ends up through the gap (**fig 6**).

MAKING THE DRESS

14 Place two Tana Lawn rectangles together with right sides facing, then pin on template. Following the edge, machine stitch around the side and top of the paper, leaving bottom edge open. Cut out, leaving a 5mm (¼in) seam allowance. Clip into seam allowance as for head. Press a 1cm (⅜in) turning around the bottom edge, then turn right side out. Ease out seams and press lightly (**fig 7**).

> HAND STITCH THE HAIR IN PLACE ALONG THE PARTING, GATHER INTO A PONY TAIL AND SECURE WITH A HAIR BAND

15 Pin the four pairs of Tana Lawn rectangles together with right sides facing and sew along side and bottom edges. Clip corners, turn right side out and press. Set your machine to the longest straight stitch and sew two rows along each frill, 5cm (2in) down from the top and 5cm (2in) apart.

16 Find the two top threads (one from each row of stitching) at one corner of the first rectangle and gently pull them whilst with your other hand gathering up the fabric. When you have gathered half the rectangle, repeat from the other end. Adjust the gathers until the frill measures 20cm (8in) wide (**fig 8**).

17 Do the same with the other three frills, then layer them one on top of the other, with the longest frill at the bottom. Tack the top edges of the frills together and zig-zag through all the gathers (**fig 9**).

18 Slip the zig-zagged skirt edge between the front and back layers of the bodice, then pin and tack it in place. Machine stitch through all the layers: this seam doesn't have to be perfect as it will be concealed by the sash.

19 Fold the Tana Lawn strip in half lengthways with right sides facing. Pin the raw edges together and machine stitch 1cm from the edge. Leave a 5cm (2in) gap in the centre of the long edge and angle the seams at the short edges to create points. Press back the seam allowance either side of the opening, trim the corners, turn right side ▶

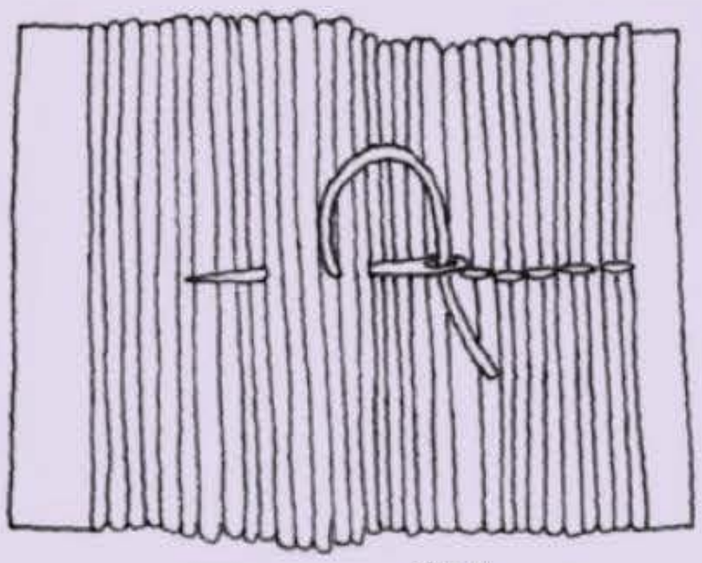
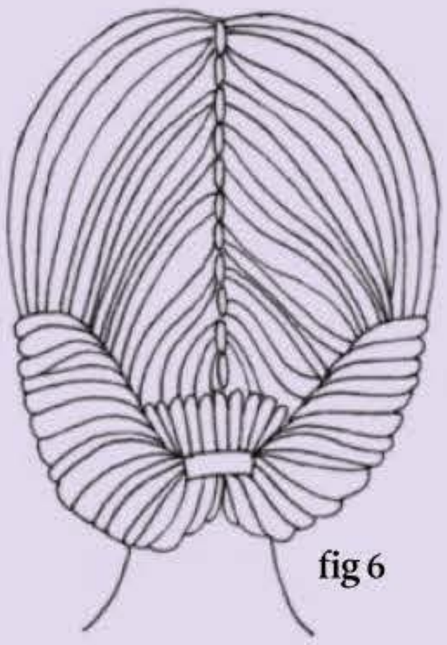


fig 5



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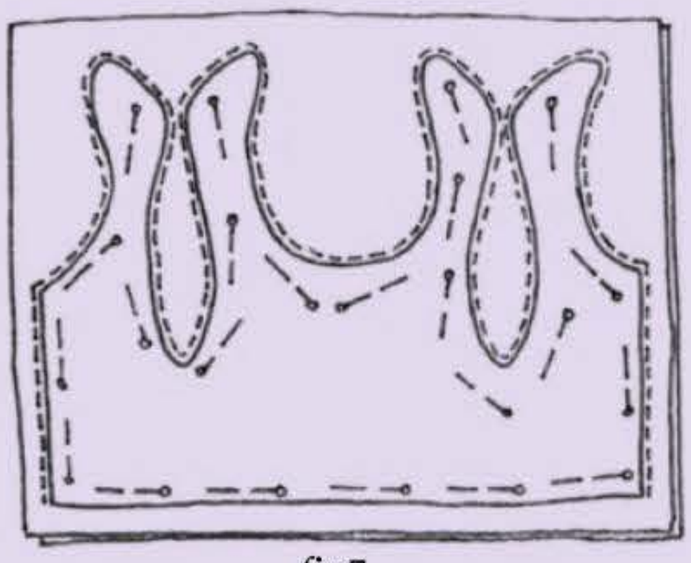

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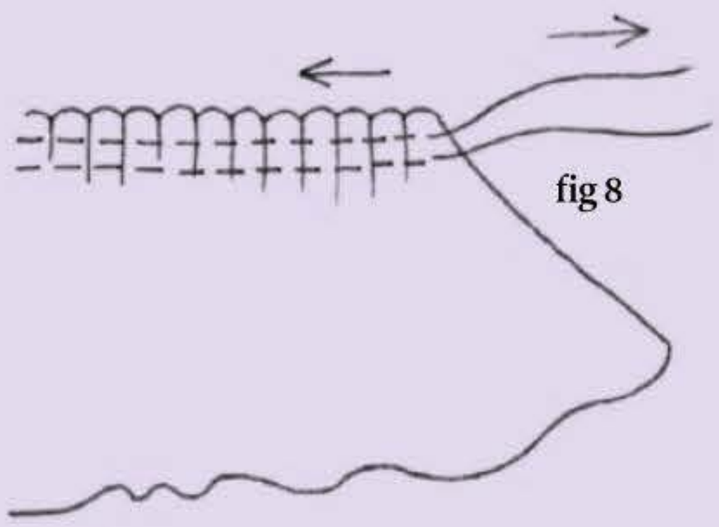


fig 8

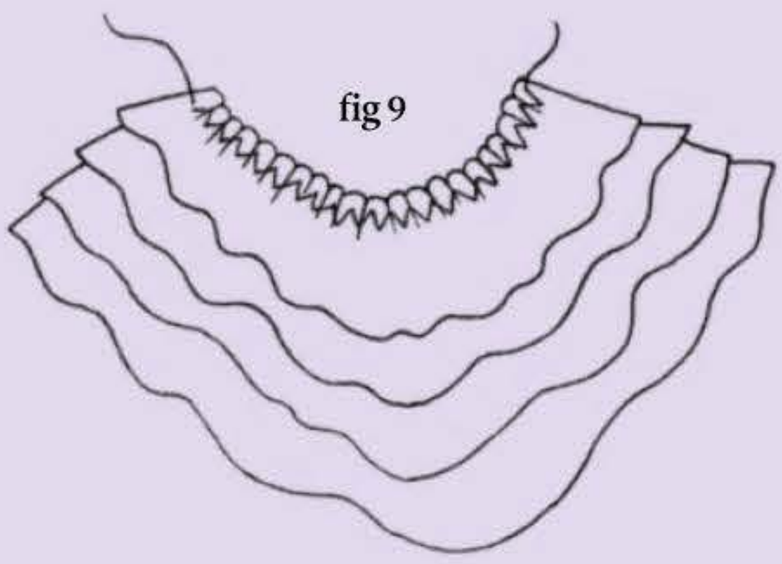


fig 9

HE HAPPY

out and press. Slip stitch the opening to close. Hand stitch the sash to the top of the skirt so it conceals the seam line (**fig 10**).

20 Separate the two halves of the velcro strip and machine stitch one half to each side of the bodice opening at the back of the dress. Place the dress on the doll, then press the velcro strips together to do up the bodice and neatly double knot the shoulder and waist ties.

MAKING THE FLOWER

21 Make a little flower from the remaining felt and fabric, using pinking shears to cut out a 15mm (¼in) circle. Sew a button in the centre and sew to the doll's hair

MAKING THE JACKET

22 Place the two felt rectangles together and pin on the template. Again following the edge of the paper closely, stitch the shoulder, side and underarm seams. Make sure you secure both ends of the stitched lines with a few reverse stitches. Cut out the jacket just outside the template, 3mm (⅛in) from the stitch lines, then cut down the centre front of the jacket. Turn right side out (**fig 11**).

MAKING THE SHOES

23 Cut the bonded felt and Tana Lawn into two 6cm(2¼in) squares. Fold one in half, with the felt facing inwards, and pin the template along the fold. Draw around the outline, then machine stitch neatly along the sole. Snip out the semicircle, then cut along the instep and trim the seam back to 3mm (⅛in). Turn right side out, fit onto doll's foot and stitch on securely. Sew a small button to the outside edge. Make the other shoe in the same way (**fig 12**).

> MAKE A FLOWER FROM THE REMAINING FELT AND FABRIC, USING PINKING SHEARS, THEN SEW A BUTTON TO THE CENTRE

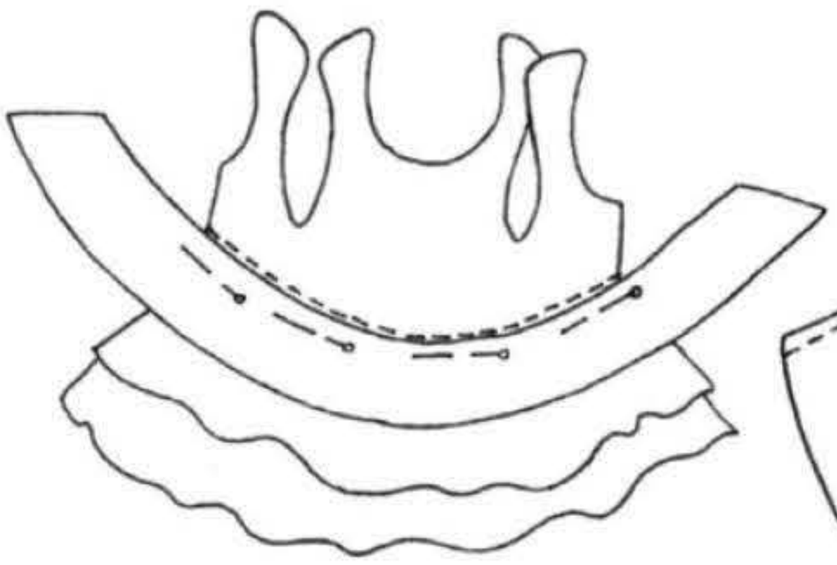


fig 10

fig 11

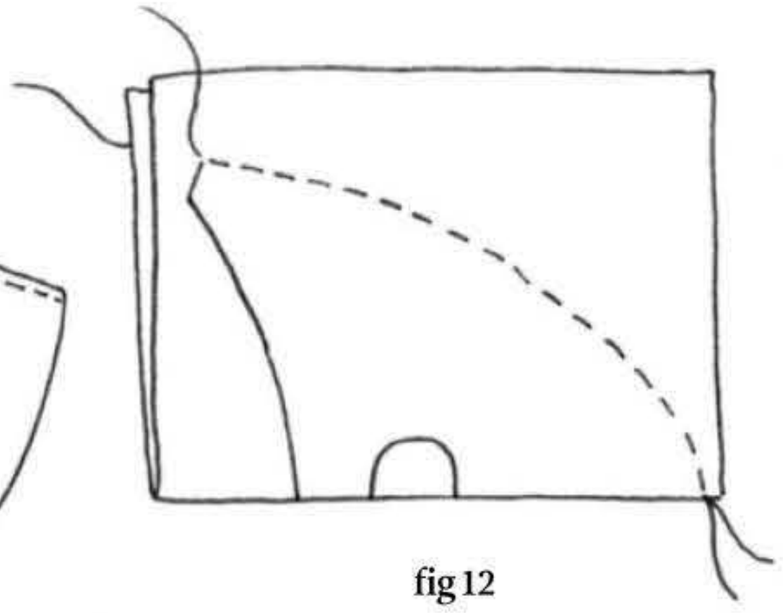
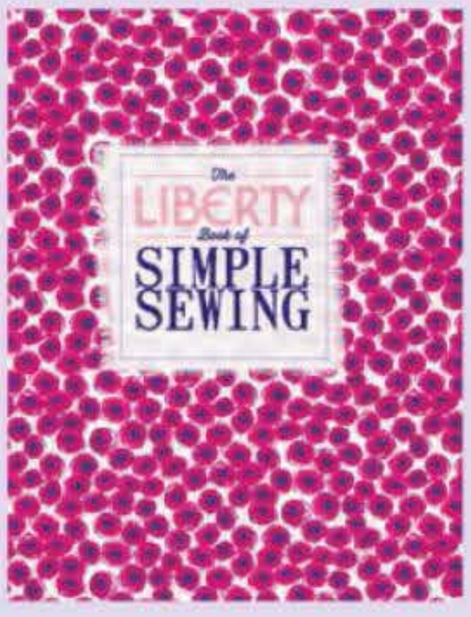


fig 12



THE LIBERTY BOOK OF SIMPLE SEWING

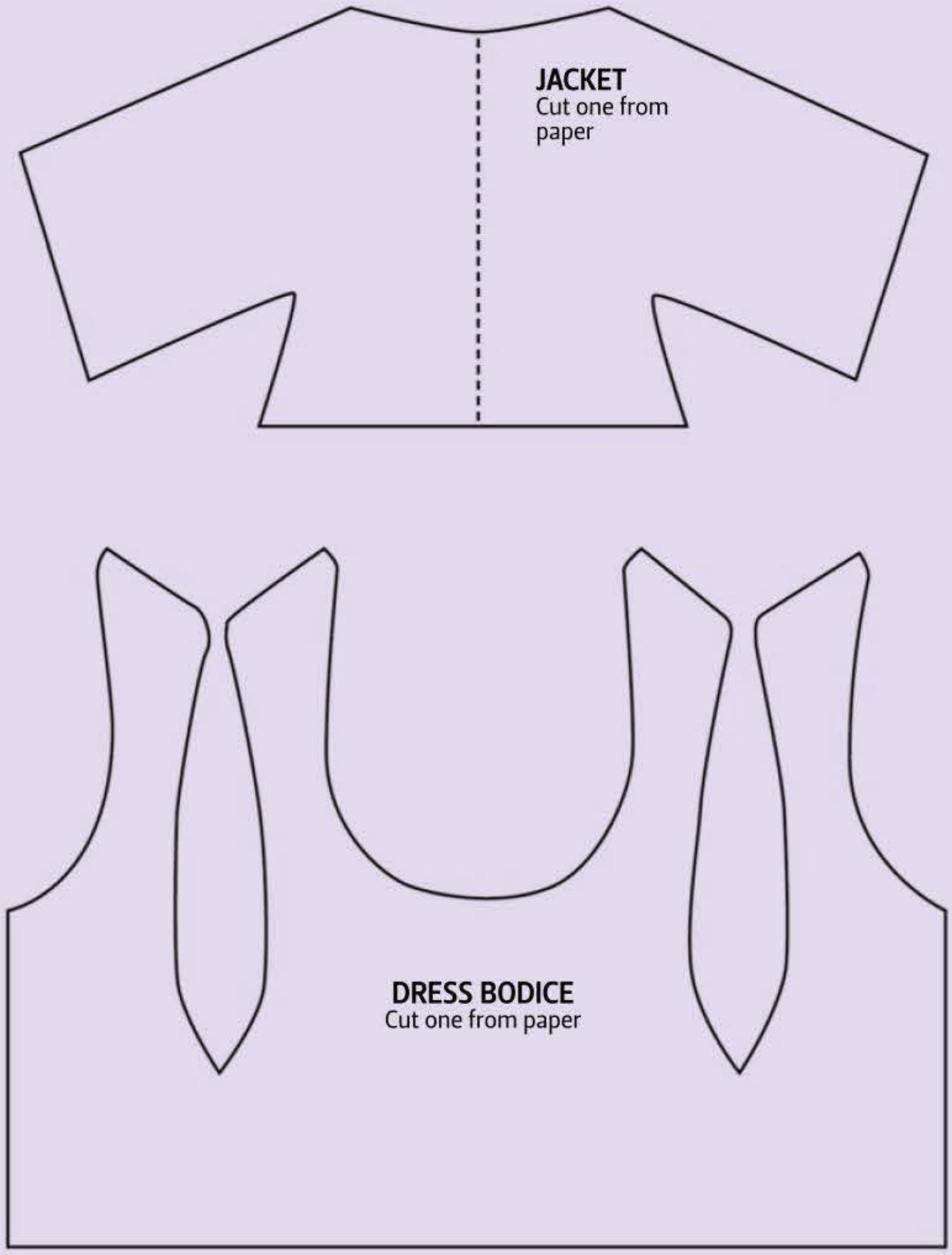
Published by Quadrille (£20)

An inspiring collection of 25 simple home furnishings and accessories, this book gives plenty of ideas and instructions for adding a unique touch of Liberty print to your life, pairing the timeless style and sophistication found in Liberty Art Studio fabrics with the simplest sewing techniques to give a quirky edge to contemporary homewares. With every project designed to be easy to sew and suitable for novices, the collection includes simple cushions, curtains, picture frames and table cloths while other homewares range from the practical to the indulgent, from the chic to the fun: a clever bolster cushion that doubles as summer storage for a winter duvet, a contemporary quilt of graphic chevrons in shades of blue, a bicycle basket bag with matching padded seat cover for Liberty style on the go. The book is packed with inspiring photography and full colour illustrated step-by-step instructions, and there's a gorgeous index of Liberty fabrics.

All the instructions are written by Lucinda Ganderton and Christine Leech, both experienced sewers and craft authors.

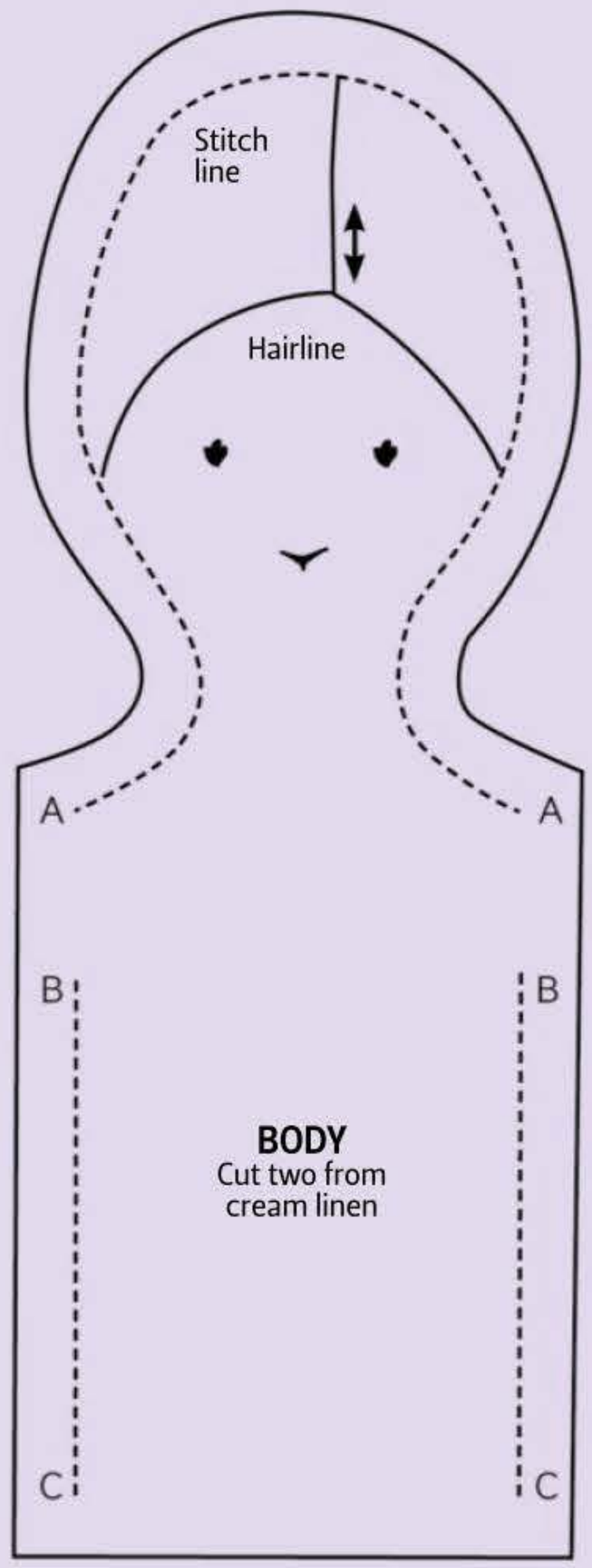
LIBBY DOLL

Enlarge templates by 200%

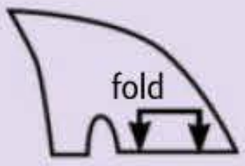


JACKET
Cut one from paper

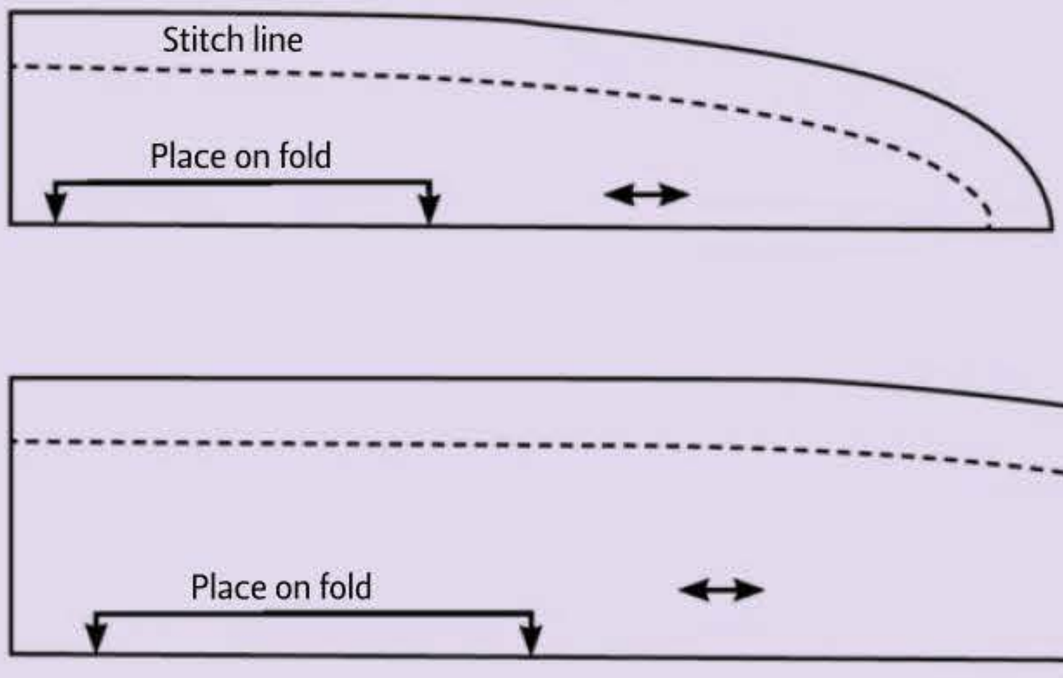
DRESS BODICE
Cut one from paper



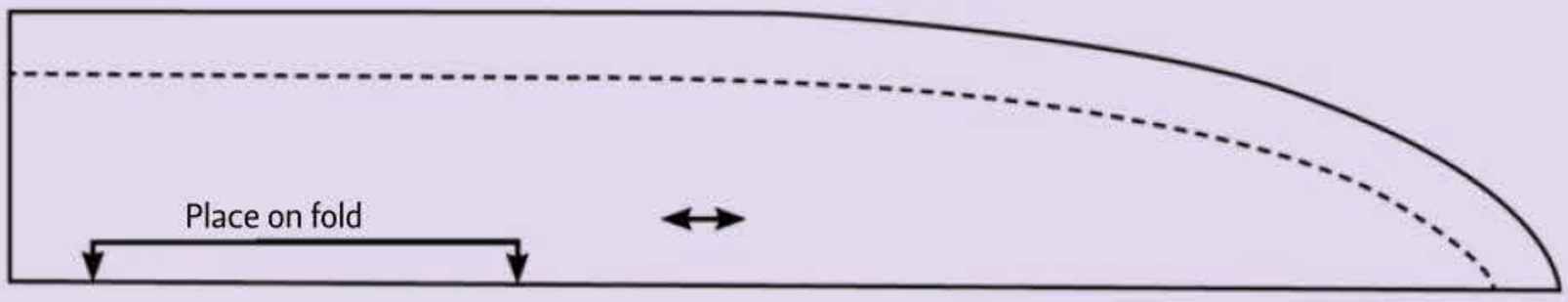
BODY
Cut two from cream linen



SHOE
Cut one from paper



ARM
Cut two on fold



LEG
Cut two on fold

Up, Up and Away!

Brighten up a nursery with this colourful hot air balloon mobile, full of personality.

FOR A GUARANTEED smile every time you enter a room, sew this adorable mobile set. It uses scraps of brightly coloured felt for the balloons, finished with recycled wine corks and hanging from a basic embroidery hoop, so it won't break the bank but will look a million dollars!

YOU WILL NEED

- Multi-coloured felt
- Embroidery needle
- Embroidery thread
- Embroidery hoop
- Stuffing
- Cork pieces (for basket)

For stockist details, see page 160

BALLOON VERSION ONE

1 Cut eight balloon body pieces (all in size 1, 2 or 3) in the same coloured felt. Cut out the corresponding sized bottom from the same felt. Cut out decorative shapes from a contrasting coloured felt. Position over your balloon body pieces and pin in place. Sew in place, by hand, with a matching coloured embroidery thread (**fig 1**).

2 Take two of your body pieces and place right sides together, then sew together using your sewing machine, along one long curved edge of the felt using a 6mm (¼in) seam allowance. Repeat to join all eight of the balloon pieces in the same way (**fig 2**).

3 Manipulate the pieces so that the first and last balloon body pieces are aligned with right sides together. Sew a seam as with the previous pieces, stopping halfway up the balloon side (leaving the top half open for turning).

4 Turn the balloon right way out through the turning gap. Fill with stuffing and then hand-stitch the gap closed (**fig 3**).

5 Hand sew the balloon bottom in place to close the hole in the balloon (**fig 4**).

BALLOON VERSION TWO

6 Cut four balloon body pieces (all in either size 1, 2 or 3) from one colour of felt. Cut four more body pieces, the same size as the first four, from a different coloured felt. Cut out a corresponding bottom from felt.

7 Decide how you want to cut your balloon body pieces and mark on the paper template. Transfer the markings to each of your felt balloon body pieces (**fig 5**).

8 Mix and match the colours until you are happy with the arrangement. Use a length of masking tape on the wrong side of the felt to hold the pieces together. Sew together using embroidery thread (**fig 6**).

9 Once all eight pieces are sewn together, sew together as per balloon version one.

MAKE THE BASKET

10 For the smaller two balloons, cut a wine cork into thirds and use one piece. For the biggest balloon (size 3) use half of a champagne cork. Lightly sand the outside to remove any lettering, then use a needle and white embroidery thread to attach the cork to the balloon at three different points.

FINISHING

11 Use invisible thread to attach the top of the balloons to an embroidery hoop. ▶

HOW JOYFUL

Designer Joy Kelley runs How Joyful, a blog that's packed with patterns, projects and inspiration. Tutorials are easy to follow with step-by-step photographs. *www.howjoyful.com*

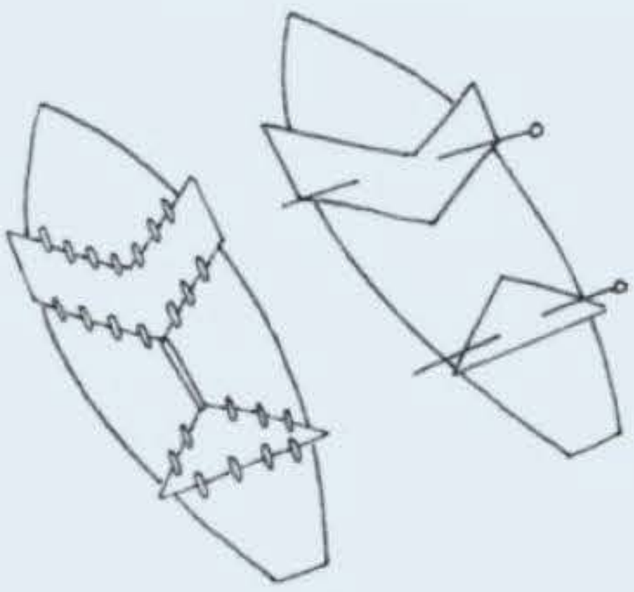


fig 1

fig 2

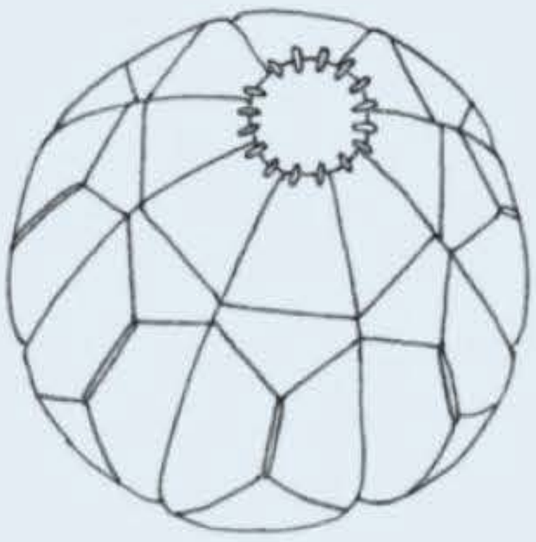
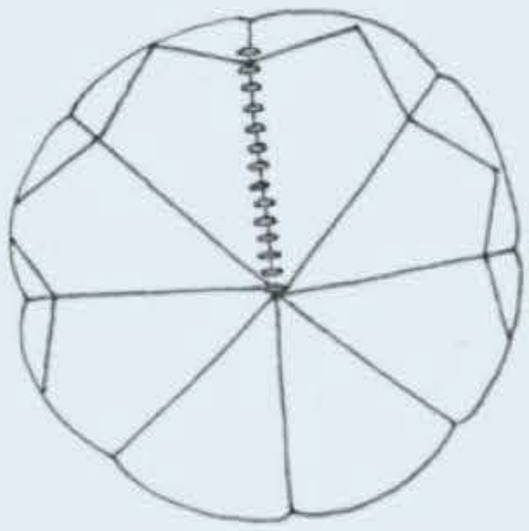


fig 3



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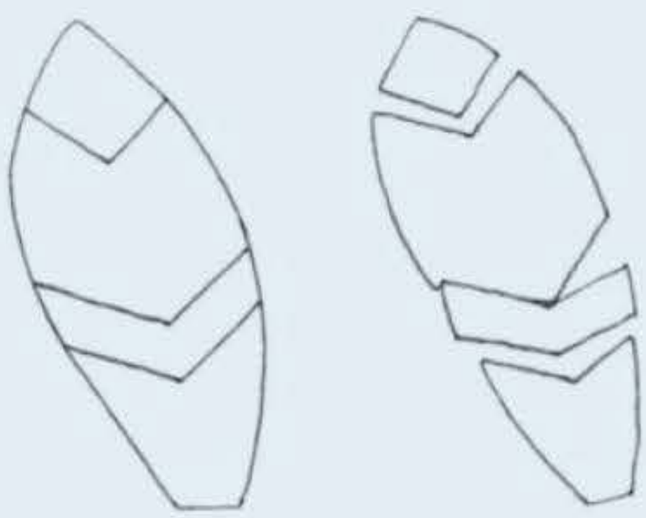


fig 5

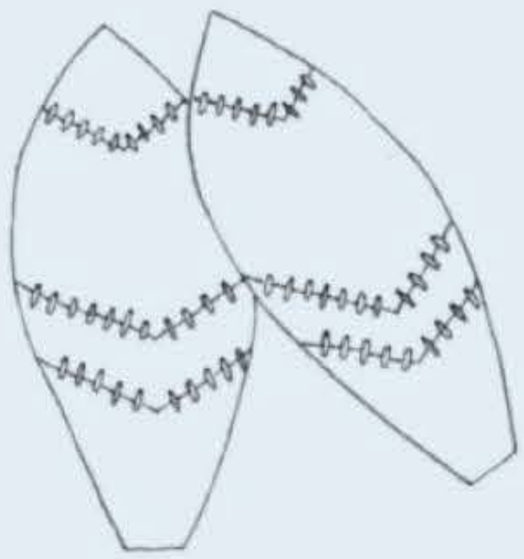


fig 6

UP, UP AND AWAY!

Templates actual size

SIZE 1
Cut 1

SIZE 2
Cut 1

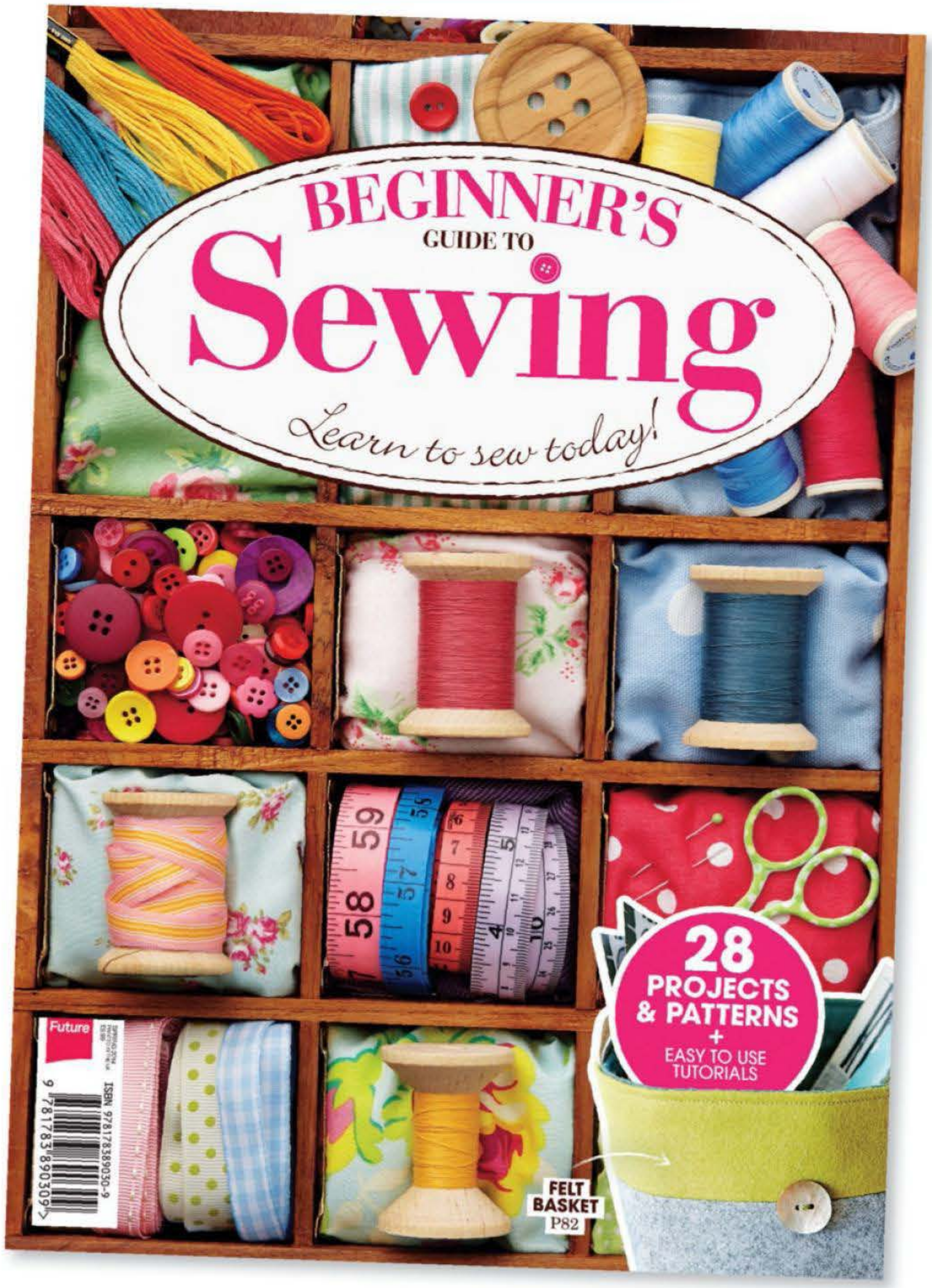
SIZE 3
Cut 1

SIZE 1
Cut 8

SIZE 2
Cut 8

SIZE 3
Cut 8

ON SALE NOW



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Know How

This section covers all the essentials you need to ensure a perfect finish, every time.

Essential Equipment
P150 We take you through all the basic supplies you'll need to fill your sewing box with.

Washing
P153 Make sure your fabrics stand the test of time with this guide to expert cleaning.

Fabric
P154 Which fabric is right for which project? We look through the various types available.

Basic Stitches
P156 From slip stitch to tacking, blanket stitch and more, it's all you need to know.

Your Sewing Machine
P158 Get the most from your machine with our complete guide to feet and functions.

Stockists
P160 Check out these top haberdasheries, plus a full listing of our favourite sewing books.

Expert GUIDE

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

Every stitcher needs a sewing box full of supplies. Here are the essential tools you should own.

1 THREAD

There's a thread for almost every occasion and your local haberdasher will be able to help you find the right one for your project. Cotton is a great all-purpose thread, but polyester (or a mix) is handy if you need extra strength. Cheap thread is more likely to break easily, so it's worth spending a little more for a great finish.

2 BUTTONS

Whether they're for practical use or just for decoration, you can never have enough buttons! They're usually sold by size (diameter in inches or millimetres) and either singly or in packs. Most are flat, but 'shanked' buttons have a loop on the underside that enables thicker fabrics to sit underneath them when the garment is buttoned up – this prevents wear on the fabric.

3 FASTENINGS

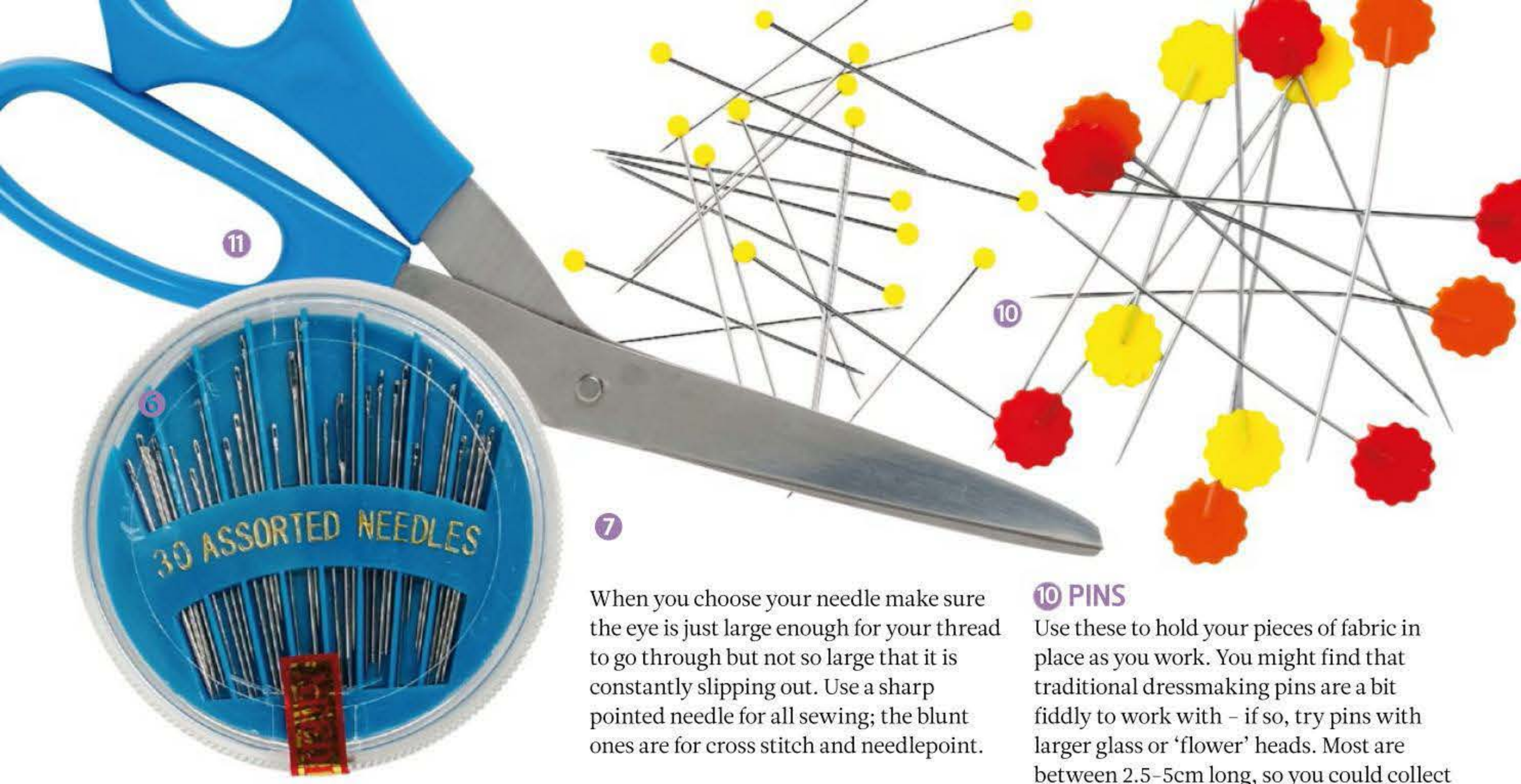
Snap fasteners (also known as press studs) are sewn on to hold two pieces of fabric together, and can't usually be seen from the front. Hooks and eyes will hold fabric edges flush together and you can also buy magnetic fastenings which are ideal for bag and purse closures. Safety pins are great for temporarily holding thicker fabrics together or for threading cord.

4 SEAM RIPPER

Everyone makes mistakes now and then, and this clever gadget takes some of the frustration out of unpicking your stitches. Simply slip the pointed end under the stitch (taking care not to catch the fabric) and cut through it by gently pulling upwards. A non-slip handle can make the seam ripper easier to use.

5 THIMBLE

It's a good idea to save yourself from pricked or calloused fingers with a thimble. They are usually worn on your middle finger to push the needle through thicker fabrics. Thimbles come in different shapes and sizes and are made from plastic,



porcelain, metal or leather. Choose one that fits snugly but not tightly.

⑥ NEEDLEWORK SCISSORS

At about 13cm long, these are much smaller – and pointier – than fabric scissors. Whether you're hand stitching or working on a sewing machine, the fine, straight blade makes them perfect for trimming stray threads and removing excess fabric in tight spaces. They should always be lightweight and comfortable to use.

⑦ NEEDLES

The needle you use is dependent on what you're sewing. You'll find specialist needles for embroidery, quilting and cross stitch, but buying a pack of assorted sewing needles is a good place to start.

When you choose your needle make sure the eye is just large enough for your thread to go through but not so large that it is constantly slipping out. Use a sharp pointed needle for all sewing; the blunt ones are for cross stitch and needlepoint.

⑧ THREAD CUTTER

Essential for the travelling stitcher, this nifty device enables you to snip your threads even when you don't have the space for (or are not permitted to carry) scissors. You can buy pendant cutters, so you can wear them on a chain. If you plan to take your sewing on a flight, check the airline's restrictions before you travel.

⑨ FABRIC

You'll usually purchase fabric by the yard or metre, but if you just want a small quantity of material to add to your stash, then go for a 'fat quarter'. This is a piece of fabric measuring about 18x22in (a yard cut into four sections), which can be bought individually or in bundles. See page 154 for more information about fabrics.

⑩ PINS

Use these to hold your pieces of fabric in place as you work. You might find that traditional dressmaking pins are a bit fiddly to work with – if so, try pins with larger glass or 'flower' heads. Most are between 2.5–5cm long, so you could collect a variety to use on different projects. Don't forget to buy a tin or make a pincushion to keep them safe!

⑪ DRESSMAKING SCISSORS

A pair of dedicated dressmaking scissors will help you snip through any fabric with ease. Look for some that are about 20cm long and have a curved handle to enable accurate cutting on flat surfaces, with pointed tips for precision. Avoid using your scissors on anything other than fabric or you will blunt the blades.

⑫ TAPE MEASURE

Measuring fabric correctly is crucial to a perfect project (measure twice, cut once!), so a tape measure is one of your most important tools. Find one that measures around 150cm and has both metric ▶

and imperial units for quick conversions. Some have different coloured sections to make measuring even easier.

MORE USEFUL SEWING TOOLS

As your skills develop, so will your toolbox. Buy quality items and they'll last for years.

13 BEADS

Use beads to add a touch of glamour and sparkle to your projects – choose from glass, ceramic, wooden or metal. Seed beads are the smallest variety, but if you're new to beading then you may find larger ones easier to work with. Attach seed beads with a beading needle – this has a very small eye to slip through the bead.

14 METAL RULER

Keep a ruler in your sewing kit for perfect measurements every time. Ensure it has both metric and imperial units – a 15cm (6in) ruler is enough for smaller projects. Go for durable metal rather than plastic and you'll also be able to use it with your rotary cutter.

15 LARGE NEEDLES

It's a good idea to keep a few larger needles in your sewing box, so you always have the right one available for your project. Tapestry needles, for example, are great for tasks such as threading elastic through a hem to create a drawstring, while chenille needles are perfect for working embroidery as they have a larger eye.

16 CUTTING MAT

A cutting mat protects your work surface while you're using a rotary cutter. Most are 'self-healing' (meaning that any scratches disappear after use) and are printed with gridlines to help you align your fabrics. Cutting mats are about 2mm thick, come in a range of sizes and should be stored flat so they don't lose their shape.

17 PINKING SHEARS

Some woven fabrics can fray easily, but you can help prevent this by cutting them with a pair of pinking shears. These leave a zig-zag edge that is great for storing fabrics and also makes a pretty decorative effect. Choose a pair that has steel blades for a clean cut, and a contoured handle so they're comfortable to work with.

18 TAILOR'S CHALK

Before you start stitching you'll need something to transfer guidelines onto your fabric. Tailor's chalk is ideal for this because it goes on and comes off easily – so easily, in fact, that you may need to be careful you don't brush it off by accident. Choose basic white for general use, or pick a coloured chalk if you're working with pale fabrics.

19 FABRIC PENCIL

Fabric pencils are ideal for marking finer lines on to fabric. They come in different types: iron-on, air erasable, water erasable and chalk which will brush off. They also come in different shades, so you can find the colour that stands out best on your material. Soapstone pencils rub off easily and show up on darker fabrics.

20 SEWING MACHINE NEEDLES

There are many different types of sewing machine needle to choose from, and different sizes are suitable for different fabrics and stitches. To ensure compatibility with your machine, check the manual for recommended brands and weights. See page 158 to find out more.

21 ROTARY CUTTER

Used to cut fabric, they are extremely sharp and should be kept away from children. They're popular with quilters because they can cut several layers of material at once and give more even results than scissors. Decide what size blade you need before you buy – small diameters tend to be better at cutting curves.

22 FABRIC PEN

For extra precision, and lines that are easier to see on pale cloth, use a soluble fabric pen to mark out your design. Always test the pen on a scrap of fabric before you begin to ensure that it comes off easily with water, and avoid ironing over any of the marks because this can make the line permanent. Great for embroidery.

23 EMBROIDERY THREAD

As the name suggests, these are most commonly used for needlework. They're usually made from 6 strand cotton, which you can separate into individual strands. If you're following a chart then you'll see a key with numbers that correspond to the required colours of thread.

Expert GUIDE

WASHING

Treat your fabrics with love and care and they'll last for years to come.

Most sewn projects will need washing from time to time and it's important to know how to do this properly to keep them looking fresh.

It's always best to wash all fabrics before cutting or stitching them. Although the temptation is to get started on a project, taking the time to do this is really worth it. Fabric can shrink when washed and often at different rates, so if you are stitching different fabrics together you may find that they shrink differently and warp your finished piece. Sometimes the colours can run so it's best to get all this out of the way before you start stitching. Also, it's easier to cut and stitch with washed and pressed fabric as it's crisper, flatter and easier to work with.

Most fabric you'll be using is 100% cotton so simply unfold it, put it in the washing machine and wash it as usual. If the fabric isn't pure cotton then handwash it in warm water with a suitable detergent then rinse thoroughly. Many fabrics have washing symbols on the selvedge – use this handy guide to refer to when washing and pressing your fabrics.

WASHING

Wool, cashmere and delicates where the temperature needs to be similar to handwashing.

Cotton, linen or viscose articles without special finishes where colours are fast at 40˚C but not 60˚C.

Cotton, linen or viscose articles without special finishes where colours are fast at 60˚C.

Handwash (do NOT machine wash).

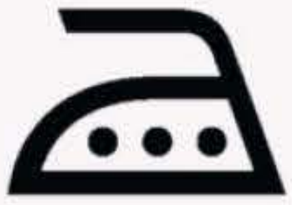
Acrylics, acetate and triacetate, including mixtures with wool; polyester/wool blends.

Nylon; polyester/cotton mixtures; polyester cotton and viscose articles with special finishes; cotton/acrylic mixtures.

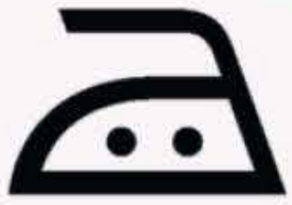
Wool, wool mixed with other fabrics; silk.

Do NOT wash.

IRONING

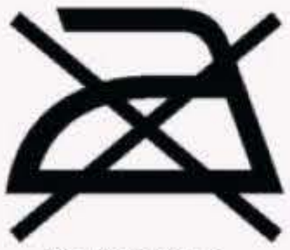


Iron on hot temp setting.



Iron on warm temp setting.

Iron on cool temp setting.



Do NOT iron.

TUMBLE DRYING

May be tumble-dried.

Do NOT tumble-dry.

BLEACHING

Chlorine bleach may be used.

Do NOT use chlorine bleach.

DRY CLEANING

Dry-clean.

Dry-clean using any solvent.

Dry-clean using any solvent EXCEPT trichloroethylene.

Dry-clean using petroleum solvent only.

Do NOT dry-clean.

DRYING AND PRESSING

Once you've washed your fabric, hang it on the line to dry. While it's still just slightly damp, iron out the creases and you're ready to begin. Remember though – if it's an artificial fabric such as polyester or fleece, then place a thin clean cloth on top before you press.

FABRIC

There are hundreds of fabrics to choose from – but which should you buy? We help you understand your options and pick the perfect material for every pattern.

WOVEN FABRICS

Cotton

Cotton is one of the world's most popular woven fabrics. It's strong, easy to work with and can be washed at high temperatures. However, it creases easily, so do make sure you press cotton fabric regularly as you cut and stitch it. Most patchwork fabrics are made from 100% cotton, which is ideal as you can buy a variety of patterns and colours and join them together without any problems, as they are all the same weight. Polyester cotton works in the same way, and has the advantage that it will crease less, but it doesn't have the crisp feel of pure cotton.

Linen

Linen, woven from flax fibres, is even stronger than cotton, although it also has a higher tendency to crease. Its natural appearance makes it ideal for that homespun look, but again, remember to press it regularly as you are working if you don't want to end up with a project that's more bedraggled than vintage! Linen is also perfect for sewing into tea towels and table linen as when washed and pressed it is lovely and crisp.

Heavier Weight Fabrics

Home furnishing fabrics, canvas, cotton drill, denim and corduroy (including needlecord) are great choices for projects that need a bit more strength, such as bags and aprons. They will also add more structure to the finished projects so will look better as well.

Some soft furnishing fabrics have the added bonus of a protective stain-resistant finish, making them ideal for sewing seat pads or outdoor tablecloths.

Delicate fabrics

Silk, cotton lawn and some vintage fabrics need a little more extra-special care as they are much finer to work with. Only use these for projects that won't be handled too much, such as decorative items like dainty bags or pictures.

SIDE TO SIDE

Woven fabrics are made from two groups of threads: a warp (the threads that run lengthwise) and a weft (the threads that run widthwise). The fabric may be plain or patterned, according to the colour and sequence of warp and weft yarns used. It will also have a border around the edge called a selvedge, which is more tightly woven to prevent the fabric from unravelling before use.

If you are making a project that is going to be used a lot then choose a fabric that can be easily washed and is colourfast.

OTHER FABRICS

Felt and Fleece

Felt is created by condensing woollen fibres, either using a machine or by hand in soapy water. Fleece is also known as polar fleece and has a combed nap which makes it warm and cosy. Always iron fleece with a thin cloth on top of it to prevent the fleece from being flattened too much.

These fabrics are popular with beginners because they are fray-resistant, don't stretch and can easily be cut to any shape.

Knit fabric

Also known as jersey, these fabrics have a knitted structure, though they are made by machine with a very fine thread. Knit fabric has lots of drape and stretch, and is often used for clothing. You'll need to use a special ball point needle for machine sewing, and as it frays easily, it's generally best to overlock the edges, too.

Net and lace

Net and lace are made by knotting together lengths of thread to create a pattern. These materials are often used as decoration, and are best cut with small, sharp sewing scissors for a neat finish. They can be used for appliqué or chosen to edge or decorate an item. Check what your fabric is made from before you wash it, in case of shrinkage.

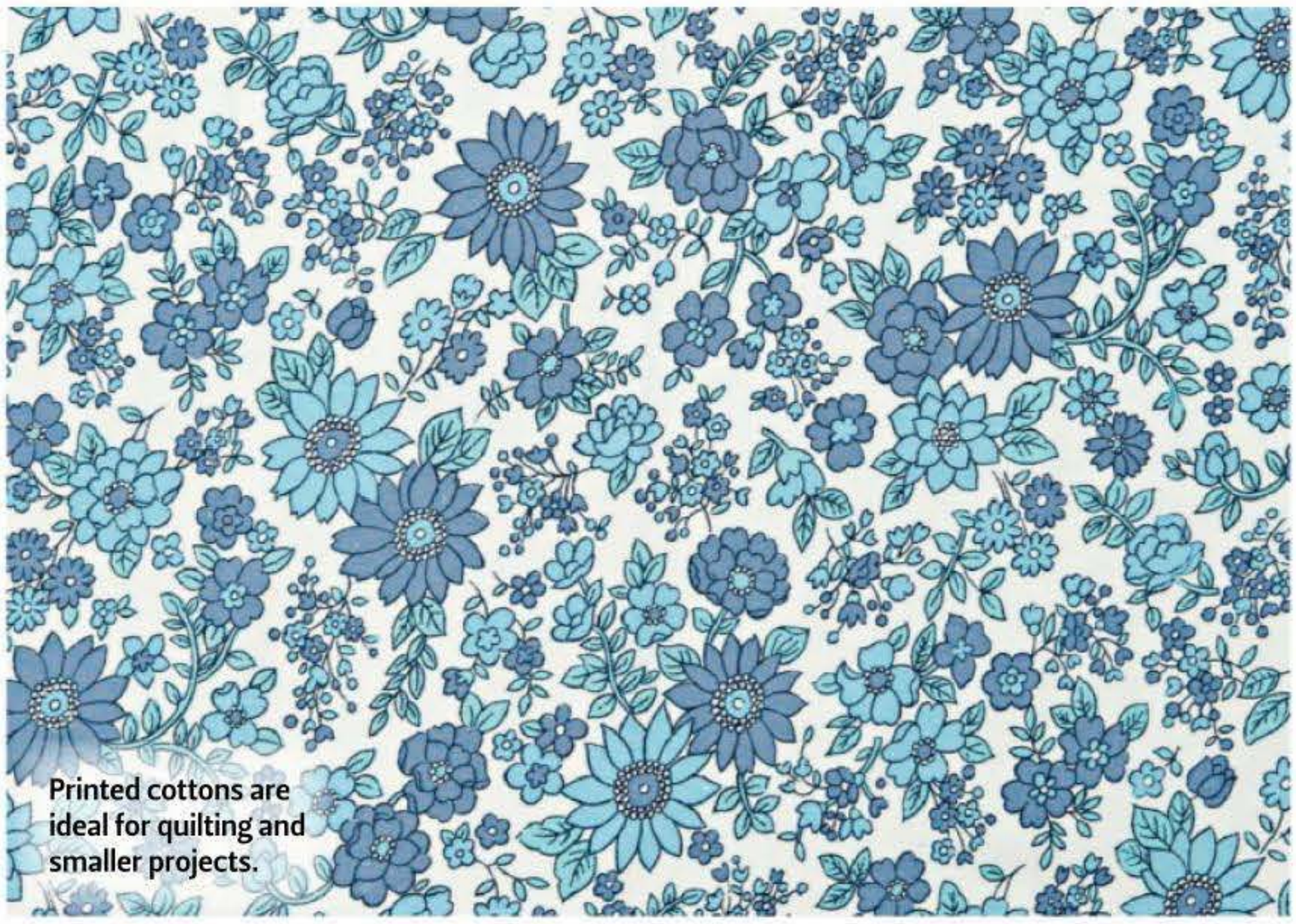
Interfacing

Interfacing gives an extra layer of support to your material – for example, to stiffen bags or fabric baskets. Choose one that's slightly lighter than your main fabric, and if you're using a fusible (iron-on) option then always test it on a scrap first.

Interfacing is available in different weights and as an iron-on or sew-in

FABRIC WIDTHS

Fabrics are sold in standard widths, which vary according to their purpose. Dressmakers' or patchwork cotton cloth generally comes in standard widths of 90cm (36in) or 115cm (45in). Some manufacturers use metric units and some use imperial, so a fabric measuring 36in will actually be a bit wider than 90cm. You will also see 'fat quarters' for sale. This is a quarter of a yard of fabric, produced by cutting half a yard of fabric in half across the length. This gives you a piece of fabric about 18 x 22in or 45.5 x 56cm. Soft furnishing fabric is normally 137cm (54in) wide and is useful for bags and aprons as it's thicker and stronger than dressmaking fabric.



Printed cottons are ideal for quilting and smaller projects.

Cotton fabric is versatile and easy to use, though it can crease easily.

version. With fusible interfacing, press the shiny side to the wrong side of your fabric. Tack sew-in interfacing to the wrong side of the fabric pieces around the edges.

Medium interfacing is soft and you should use this to add a little body to your finished item. Firm interfacing is stiffer and will add more definition and structure.

Interlining and wadding

Curtain interlining is a more flexible alternative to interfacing and will give projects such as bags and baskets a fuller look without being too stiff. Tack this to the wrong side of your main fabric then work with it in the usual way. It's ideal for putting between the main fabric and lining on the base of a bag.

Wadding comes in many different weights and materials and is probably best known as the padding that's used between the top layer and backing on quilts. However, it's also good for adding shape and softness to bags and fabric boxes.

Tear-away stabilizer

This non-woven material is perfect for using to back machine embroidery as it adds body to the finished item and supports the fabric holding the stitches. After you have finished the embroidery, gently tear away the excess stabilizer.

Vintage fabrics

The beauty of vintage fabrics is that they already have that worn look and will give a unique feel to your project. Buy fabric items such as table linen, curtains and old clothing from sales and cut them up to use again. Hand wash vintage fabrics before use to remove possible dust and dirt.

KNOW YOUR NAP

Nap is the direction of the raised pile on a material such as velvet and fleece, and it makes the fabric look and feel different for different angles. If you brush 'against the nap', the fabric feels rougher.

When you cut out different pieces make sure that the nap runs in the same direction on each one. If you are sewing clothing, ensure the nap runs down the body, as that is the direction it will usually be brushed by hands when worn. Alternatively, if the pile runs up the garment, it will give the fabric a darker, more lustrous appearance.

Expert GUIDE

BASIC STITCHES

Every stitcher needs to know these basic skills – if there are any you're unsure about, just follow our simple instructions and diagrams to find out how they're done.

RUNNING STITCH

This stitch is similar to tacking and is generally used for decorating a finished piece, or for gathering. Simply bring your needle up and down through the fabric to create regular stitches (**figs 1a and 1b**).

BACKSTITCH

This is a strong stitch, useful for seams that will take a lot of weight or wear. It's also decorative, forming a neat line. It should be worked so that all the stitches are the same length with no gaps left between them. Work from right to left. Bring the needle up through the fabric a stitch length to the left of where you want the stitching to actually start, and then take the needle back to the start, through the fabric to create the first stitch, and then up again another stitch length to the left ready to work the second stitch (**figs 2a and 2b**).

SLIP STITCH

Since this stitch is almost invisible, it's perfect for sewing on bias binding and appliqué shapes. It's usually formed by slipping the thread under a fold of fabric, and can be used to join two folded edges together, a folded edge to a flat piece of fabric, or even two flat pieces of fabric, without the thread being seen.

Work from right to left. Fasten the thread by taking a couple of stitches where they won't be seen, and then bring the needle and thread out through one folded edge. Your stitch under the fabric will be a long, diagonal one. Next, push your needle down through the second fabric, very close to where the first fabric lies, forming a tiny vertical stitch. Bring needle out and draw the thread through, then repeat.

DOUBLE STITCH

This is a tidy way to start off without using a knot. Make your first stitch and then stitch over it a couple of times, keeping it as neat as possible. Slide the needle through the stitches on the wrong side for extra security before you start sewing. You can also use double stitch to fasten off when you finish sewing, to secure your thread.

fig 1a

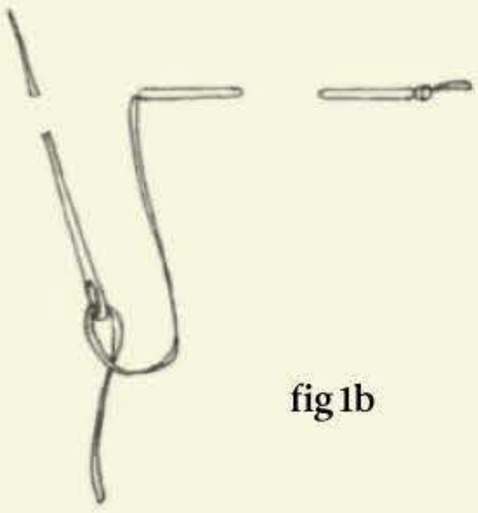


fig 1b

> BACKSTITCH IS STRONG AND USEFUL FOR SEAMS, BUT ALSO DECORATIVE, FORMING A NEAT LINE

fig 2

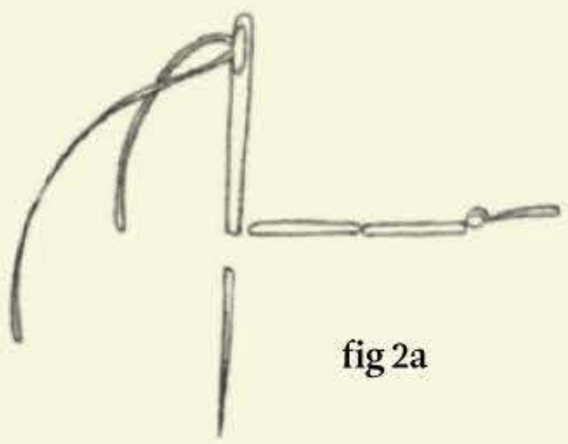


fig 2a

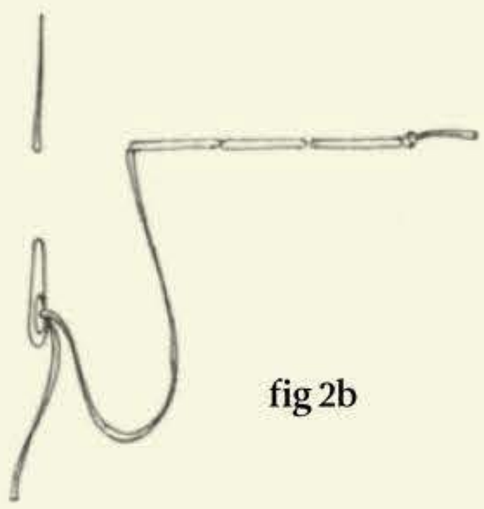


fig 2b

BASIC TACK

Simple tacking stitches are used for holding two pieces of fabric together and making temporary hems. Since the stitches won't be staying in the fabric, you can use a knot to start off. Use a single thread to make straight stitches, evenly spaced (**fig 3**). When you need to remove them, if your fabric is loosely woven, you can just pull the thread – on denser material, cut the thread every few stitches and pull it out of the fabric gently.

LONG AND SHORT TACK

This is a neater stitch, used when the stitches might be in the fabric for a while. Work a long version of the basic tack and leave a short space in between each stitch.

DIAGONAL TACK

Diagonal tacks are used where one piece of fabric lies on top of another. Stitches on the wrong side are all vertical (**fig 4**).

BLANKET STITCH

Work along the edge of the fabric, pulling the thread through the loop created by each stitch. Vertical stitches should be evenly spaced and of the same length (**fig 5**).

Use a variety of stitches to create decorative effects.

fig 3

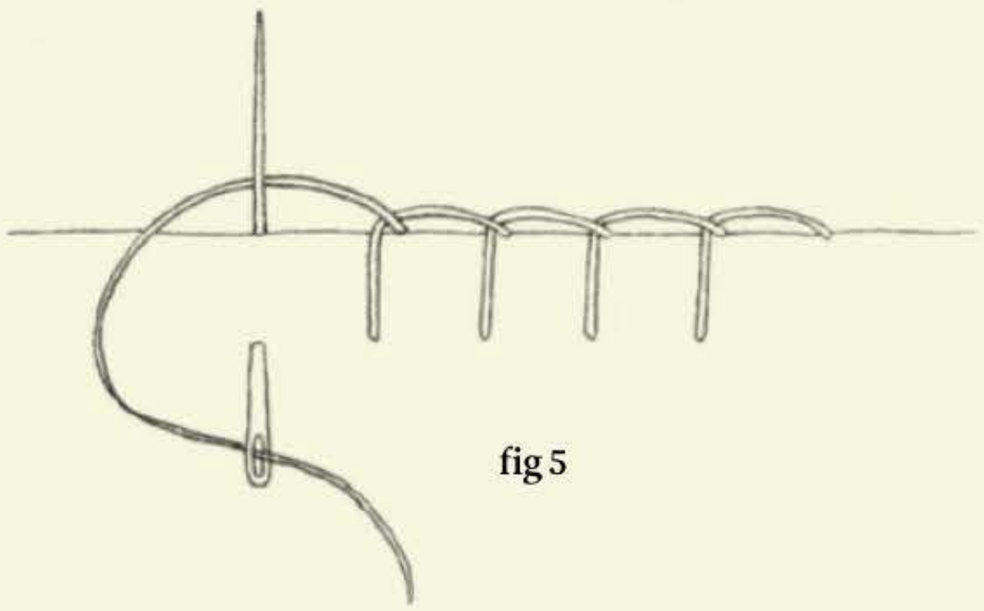


fig 5

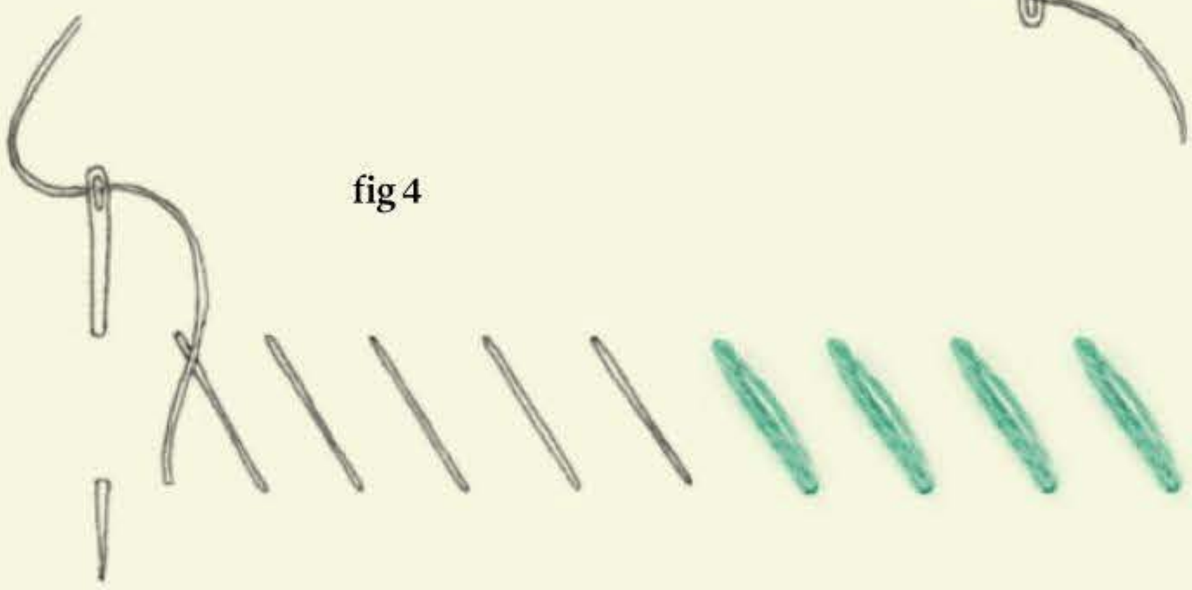


fig 4

YOUR SEWING MACHINE

Make sure you get the best from your machine with our expert know-how.

Sewing by hand can be wonderfully relaxing, but if you want to make up items such as curtains, cushions and more for your home then you'll need a sewing machine. Whether you're a complete newcomer or you're more experienced but could do with a refresher, here's our top-to-bottom guide to help you find your way around your machine. You'll be whizzing up projects in next to no time!

NEEDLE

A sewing machine needle moves in and out of the fabric without going all the way through as it would in hand sewing. Most machines come with a needle already in place, but your manual will show how to swap it for a different one if you need to. Standard needles are typically size 75 or 80 (UK sizing). For tougher jobs, such as sewing denim or very heavy curtains, go for a stronger needle with a larger number – 110 or 120. When sewing a fine fabric such as organza or a sheer net curtain, go down to a fine size 60. When you buy your fabric, it's worth asking which needle is best for the job.

FOOT

This is the metal attachment that sits beneath your needle and holds your fabric in place. There's a lever to move it up and down. Raise it up when positioning your fabric and lower it back down when sewing. The basic presser foot is the one you'll use most, though there are dozens of speciality feet for everything from quilting to attaching zips and creating buttonholes.

BOBBIN

This small plastic or metal spool sits in a special housing underneath the sewing area, below the foot and needle. Check the manual to find out how to load the bobbin. Once loaded, the bobbin thread and top thread feeds meet to form each stitch.

THREAD FEED

Your spool of thread sits at the top of the machine. It threads through a series of numbered channels and loops before it reaches the needle. This maintains an even thread tension and avoids tangles. Your machine will have a numbered dial that can be raised or lowered to adjust the tension as your fabric requires.

STITCH SELECTOR

Dials, switches, knobs... the method used to change the stitch type varies between machines, but the principle is the same. For most craft and home projects, all you'll need are the basic straight stitch and zig-zag. Once you're more experienced, you can try some of the more decorative stitches your machine has to offer.

HAND WHEEL

Use the hand wheel to move the needle up and down manually. It's essential for controlling the sewing line in tight spots and corners. To avoid your thread getting caught or tangled, be sure to always turn the wheel toward you. When winding bobbins, you'll need to disengage the needle action, which is often achieved by pulling out on the hand wheel.

STITCH WIDTH

Sometimes this function is built in, so the machine automatically adjusts itself as you change the stitch type. If your machine has a dial, leave the width at 0 for straight stitches because the needle doesn't need to move from side to side. For all other stitches, simply adjust the width as needed, practising on a scrap of fabric first.

STITCH LENGTH

A dial or knob will enable you to change the length of your stitches, whether they're straight stitches, zig-zags or any other pattern. A long stitch length is useful for quick tacking lines. For regular sewing, aim for a length of around 2 or 2.5, which will be strong enough for most seams.

REVERSE STITCHING

Most machines have a button or switch that enables you to sew in the reverse direction. Even older machines should have a method for reverse stitching. It's the best technique to start and finish off your sewing – all you need to do is stitch forwards and backwards for a few centimetres to secure your threads.

FOOT PEDAL

The foot pedal is connected to the machine and sits on the floor. The pedal is pressure-sensitive, so gentle pressure results in slow stitching, while pressing harder will run the motor faster – great for working long, straight lines. Some machines also have a separate speed control, which gives you even more command over your pace.

FEET

Many machines come with a variety of feet or you can buy them separately – just make sure the new feet match your make and model as they do differ. When using a new foot for the first time, practise on a scrap of fabric until you feel comfortable.

Hemmer foot

This is also called the rolled hemmer and is used for stitching a really narrow rolled hem – perfect for table linen edges. It has a scrolled feeder on top and a scrolled groove underneath. Feed the edge of the fabric through it and the foot turns it under, then the needle stitches it into place.

Appliqué foot

This a small clear foot so you can see exactly where you are stitching – crucial when stitching on small appliqué shapes, especially around curves. They often have a small arrow in the centre so you can keep the edge of the shape lined up.

Open embroidery foot

The open toe gives greater visibility when stitching freehand embroidery and quilting.

Zipper foot

A zipper foot can be adjusted so it is on the left or the right side of the needle. This allows you to sew the zip to your fabric without the presser foot applying pressure to the zipper teeth. It has a narrow centrally placed toe so you can stitch really close to the zip teeth.

Piping foot

You can often sew down piping with a zipper foot – alternatively, a piping foot has a channel down its length that fits over the cord and fabric, so you can stitch close to the cord for a neat finish.

Walking foot

This foot is great if you are sewing several layers of fabric or wadding together as it helps to prevent them shifting and slipping. It's essential for quilting or stitching together thicker fabrics, particularly those with a higher nap.

> A LONG STITCH LENGTH IS USEFUL FOR QUICK TACKING LINES – FOR REGULAR SEWING, AIM FOR A LENGTH OF 2 OR 2.5, WHICH WILL BE STRONG ENOUGH FOR MOST SEAMS

Stockists

Need to stock up on your fabric stash?
Find everything you need at these stores.

Abakhan
Massive selection of plain and printed fabrics plus haberdashery.
01745 562100
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Art Gallery Fabrics
A huge range of prints from a "contemporary elegant" brand.
www.artgalleryfabrics.com

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Lots of gorgeous fabric packs and jelly rolls.
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Birch Fabrics
Stunning print designs on 100% organic cotton.
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Penguin & Fish
Modern embroidery patterns, organic fabrics and more.
www.penguinandfish.com

Sewandso
The UK's largest online needlecraft shop, with an extensive range of tools, trimmings and sewing essentials.
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www.sewandso.co.uk

Sew Essential
A large selection of patterns, sewing machines and haberdashery, including piping cord for a perfect finish.
01283 210422
www.sewessential.co.uk

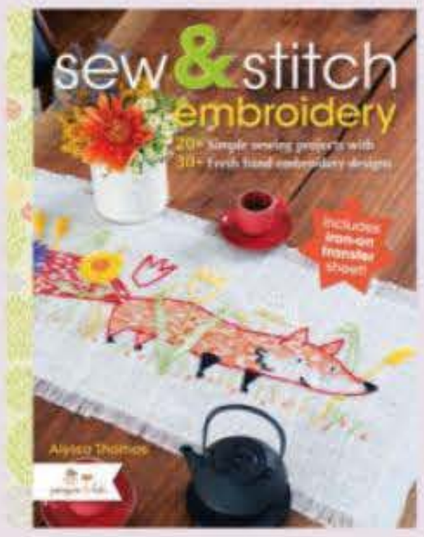
Brought to Book

Some of our favourite sewing books – turn to the pages listed to try out a project!

STITCH SAVVY
Deborah Moebes
Krause Publications,
p18, p100

CUSHIONS & QUILTS
Jo Colwill
David & Charles, ***p28***

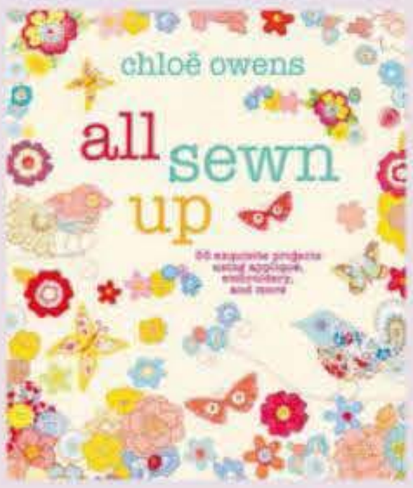
AND SEW TO BED
Caro London
CICO Books, ***p40, p50***



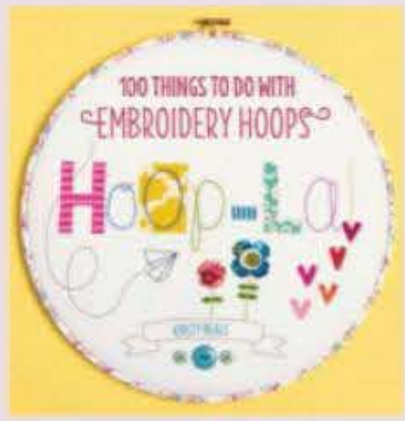
SEW & STITCH EMBROIDERY
Alyssa Thomas
Krause Publications, ***p58***

LITTLE SEW & SEW
Christine Leech
Quadrille, ***p62***

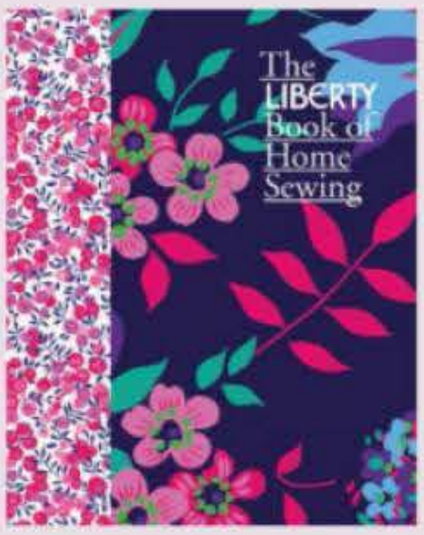
STASH HAPPY APPLIQUÉ
Cynthia Shaffer
Lark Crafts, ***p70***



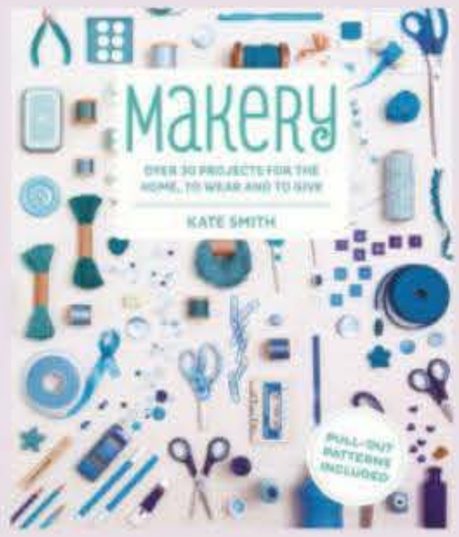
ALL SEWN UP
Chloë Owens
CICO Books, ***p76, p92***



HOOP-LA!
Kirsty Neale
David & Charles, ***p80***



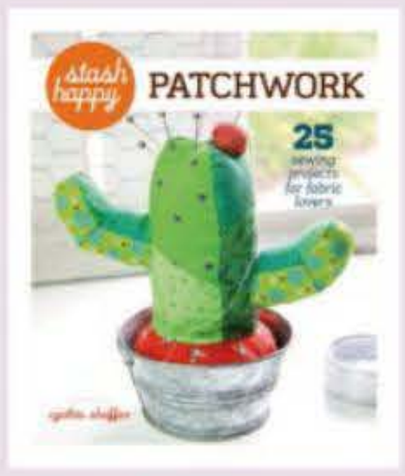
THE LIBERTY BOOK OF HOME SEWING
Lucinda Ganderton
Quadrille, ***p84***



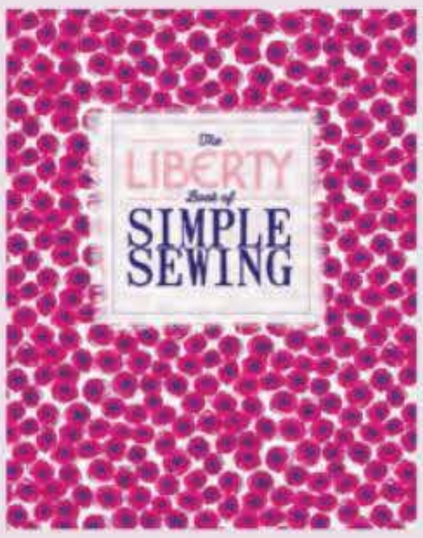
MAKERY
Kate Smith
Mitchell Beazley, ***p104***

PATCHWORK PLEASE!
Ayumi Takahashi
Interweave, ***p110***

A PASSION FOR QUILTING
Nicki Trench
CICO Books, ***p120***



STASH HAPPY PATCHWORK
Cynthia Shaffer
Lark Crafts, ***p127***



THE LIBERTY BOOK OF SIMPLE SEWING
Lucinda Ganderton & Christine Leech
Quadrille, ***p138***

Fabric Fantastic

The right printed lining can give personality to your projects.

Linings add a finishing touch to so many projects, and the right print can give a garment or accessory extra charm. Whether it's a fun design peeking out from inside a formal work bag, or just the right complementary colour backing your hand-pieced quilt, the lining fabric can make all the difference. And for a fresh look, why not cover buttons in a pretty cloth and use instead of metal or plastic?

1. Meadow Sweet by Sarah Henderson, ***www.michaelmillerfabrics.com***
2. Hope Valley, Piney Woods, ***www.freespiritfabric.com***
3. Classically Home Laurel Cottage, ***www.benartex.com***
4. Tiny Flowers, ***www.themakeryonline.co.uk***
5. Rowan Fabrics, ***www.westminsterfabrics.com***
6. Plain, available from most fabric shops, ***www.countrythreadspatchwork.co.uk***
7. Matpewka, Kokka, ***www.themakeryonline.co.uk***
8. Batik fabric, ***www.countrythreadspatchwork.co.uk***
9. Spots, available from most fabric shops, ***www.countrythreadspatchwork.co.uk***
10. Cabbages and Roses, ***www.cabbagesandroses.com***
11. Crazy Llamas, ***www.themakeryonline.co.uk***
12. Plain, available from most fabric shops, ***www.countrythreadspatchwork.co.uk***
13. Lollipop Baby by Kelly Tanner, ***www.bluehillfabrics.com***
14. Pigs and Mushrooms, Kokka, ***www.themakeryonline.co.uk***
15. Tilda Ornaments 6, ***www.unitednotions.com***
16. Bees from Rosebud Collection by Renee Nanneman of Need'l love, ***www.unitednotions.com*** ***www.andoverfabrics.com***
17. Apple print, Classically Home Laurel Cottage ***www.themakeryonline.co.uk***

THE FABRIC SELECTOR

This essential book is a must-have on all sewist's shelves. Written by Dana Willard, *The Fabric Selector* (Search Press, £12.99) is a practical and comprehensive reference to choosing the right fabric for the right project, covering the fabrics' properties, suitabilities and care tips.

Thanks to Country Threads www.countrythreadspatchwork.co.uk 01225 480056 and The Makery www.themakeryonline.co.uk 01225 421775 for providing all the fabrics shown

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